



## VA'ESCHANAN

23 I entreated\* the Lord at that time, saying, 24 “O Lord God, You have begun to show Your servant Your greatness and Your strong hand, for who is [like] God in heaven or on earth who can do as Your deeds and Your might? 25 Pray let me cross over and see the good land that is on the other side of the Jordan, this good mountain and the Lebanon.” 26 But the Lord was angry with me because of you, and He did not listen to me,

and to join in prayer. The best example is וַיִּזְעַק וַיִּשְׁעָה גְדֹלָה וַיִּמְרָה (Es. 4:1), *he cried with alarm, with a bitter cry*. Mordecai didn't do that because he became hysterical; rather, he summoned the community to join in to prayer. Another example: וַיִּזְעַק אֶל יְהוָה כָּל הַלַּיְלָה, *he cried out to God all the night* (I Sam. 15:11). Samuel summoned the people to join him in prayer for Saul. Had the people done so, the wrath of the Holy One would have been mitigated, and Saul wouldn't have lost his kingdom.

וַיִּזְעַק expresses the love of the individual for the community, and the dedication of the community to the individual. A solitary person prays *tefillah* in isolation, silently, in complete privacy. *Tefillah* is the monologue of the individual who stands before the Almighty, who is the One God—an individual in the absolute sense of the word. וַיִּשְׁעָה, on the other hand, means that I exist only within the community, within the many. My existence is justified because I feel love for the community. I get involved with the *tzibbur* and I summon the *tzibbur* to pray with me—not *lehispsallel* before God, but לְיָעֶק before Him.

After the Golden Calf incident, when Moses prayed for the community for forty days in succession, God tolerated his intercession on behalf of the community. Indeed, He granted atonement to the people. On this occasion, however, when Moses tried to pray to the Almighty, God stopped him in the middle. When Moses' prayer was recited in the plural, all the gates of prayer were open and the Lord allowed him to intercede many, many days for the people. When Moses changed his prayer to the singular, the gates of prayer and loving-kindness were slammed in his face. The Almighty rejected the prayer. He did not permit him to continue praying; nor did He grant his wish.

The *halachah* has taught the individual to include his fellow man in his prayer. The individual must not limit himself to his own needs, no matter how pressing those needs are and how distinguished he is. *Halachah* has formulated prayer in the plural. There is hardly a prayer which avails itself of the grammatical singular. Even private prayers, such as those offered on the occasion of sickness, death, or other crises, are recited in the plural: for example, *May the Almighty comfort you among all mourners of Zion and Jerusalem*. The Gemara (*Shabbos* 12a-b) states that when one visits the sick, one says, according to R. Yehudah: *May God have mercy on you and other sick people of Israel*; according to R. Yosi: *May God have mercy on you among other sick people of Israel*. Rashi there comments: *Through inclusion of the others, his prayer is heard, for the sake of the many*.

The Midrash states that had the community joined Moses in his prayer, God would have granted the request. He would not have rejected the prayer of the many (*Sifri* 3:24). Unfortunately, the community did not understand the secret of prayer-by-the-many. As a consequence of their ignorance, Moses died in the desert. (*Blessings and Thanksgiving: The Community*, pp. 20-21)

The word וַיִּשְׁעָה implies abject supplication. The name for the *tachanun* prayer is derived from the same root as וַיִּשְׁעָה, connoting the idea that we can make no claim that we deserve to have our request fulfilled, that we have no merits that would justify any request on our own behalf. Hence, we recite this prayer in the position of *nefilas apayim*, while fallen on our face. (*Moriah*, 1978)

ואמר יי לי סגי לך לא תוסף למלא  
 קדמי עוד בפתגמי הדיו: כו סק לריש  
 רמתא וזקוף עיניך למערבא ולצפונא  
 ולדרומא ולמדינתא וחזו בעיניך ארי  
 לא תעבר ית ירדנא הדיו: כח ופקד ית  
 הושע ותקפתי ואלמתי ארי הוא יעבר  
 קדם עמא הדיו והוא יחסו ותחון ית  
 ארעא די תחזו: כט ויתבנא בחילתא  
 לקבל בית פעור: א וכעו ישראל שמע  
 לקימאי ולדיניא די אנא מאלף יתכון  
 למעבד גדיל דתיחון ותיחון ותיחון  
 ית ארעא די יי אלקא דאבהתכון יחב  
 לכו: ב לא תוספון על פתגמא די  
 אנא מפקד יתכון ולא תמנעון מניה  
 למטר ית פקודיא די אלקכון די אנא  
 מפקד יתכון: ג עיניכון חזו ית די עבד  
 יי בבעל פעור ארי כל גברא די אזל  
 בתר בעל פעור שציה יי אלקה מבינד:  
 ד ואתון דאדבקתון בדחלתא דיי  
 אלקכון קמיו פולכו יומא דיו: ה חזו  
 דאלפית יתכון קמיא ודיניא קמא די  
 פקדני יי אלקי למעבד פו בגו ארעא  
 די אתון עליו תפון למירתת: ו ותטרון

ויאמר יהוה אלי רב־לך אל־תוסף דבר אלי עוד  
 בדבר הזה: כו עלה | ראש הפסגה ושא עיניך ימה  
 וצפנה ותימנה ומזרחה וראה בעיניך כי־לא תעבר  
 את־הירדן הזה: כח וצו את־יהושע וחזקהו ואמצהו  
 כי־הוא יעבר לפני העם הזה והוא ינחיל אותם את־  
 הארץ אשר תראה: כט ונשב בגיא מול בית פעור:  
 פ ד א ועתה ישראל שמע אל־החקים ואל־  
 המשפטים אשר אנכי מלמד אתכם לעשות למען  
 תחיו ובאתם וירשתם את־הארץ אשר יהוה אלהי  
 אבותיכם נתן לכם: ב לא תספו על־הדבר אשר אנכי  
 מצוה אתכם ולא תגרעו ממנו לשמר את־מצות  
 יהוה אלהיכם אשר אנכי מצוה אתכם: ג עיניכם  
 הראות את אשר־עשה יהוה בבעל פעור כי כל־  
 האיש אשר הלך אחרי בעל־פעור השמידו יהוה  
 אלהיך מקרבך: ד ואתם הדבקים ביהוה אלהיכם  
 חיים כלכם היום: שני ה ראה | למדתי אתכם חקים  
 ומשפטים כאשר צוני יהוה אלהי לעשות פו בקרב  
 הארץ אשר אתם באים שמה לרשתה: ו ושמרתם

כששלח מן העם אל העי והוא יש, ויפו מִפֶּס אֲנִי קָעִי וגו' (יהושע ז, ה), וכיון שנפל על פניו אמר לו קָס לָךְ (סס פסוק י'), קָס לָךְ כתיב, אמה הוא העומד במקומך ומשלח את בני למלחמה, למה זה אמה נופל על פניך, לא כך אמרתי למשה רבך אם הוא עובר עוצרין ואם לאו אין עוצרין: (כט) ונשב בגיא וגו'. ונלמדתם לעבודה זרה, אעפ"כ יצאתה ישראל שמע אל החקים והכל מחול לך, ואני לא זכיתי לימחל לי: (ב) לא תוספו. כגון חמש פרשיות בתפילין, חמשת מינין בלולב, וחמש לנייות, וכן זולא תגרעו: (ו) ושמרתם. זו משנה:

רב לך. שלא יאמרו הרב כמה קשה והתלמיד כמה סרען ומפליז. דבר אחר, רב לך, הרבה מזה שמור לך, רב טוב הנפון לך: (כו) וראה בעיניך. בקשת ממני זארהה את הארץ הטובה, אני מראה לך את כולה, שנאמר (להלן לה, א) ויִקְשְׁהוּ ה' אֶת כָּל הָאָרֶץ: (כח) וצו את יהושע. על הטרדות ועל המשאות ועל המריבות: וחזקהו ואמצהו. בדצריך, שלא ידך לבו לומר כשם שנענש רבי עליהם כך סופי ליענש עליהם, מצטיחו אני כי הוא יעזור והוא ינחיל: כי הוא יעבור. אם יעזור לפנייהם ינחלו, ואם לאו לא ינחלו. וכן אמה מוצא

Do not add to the word which I command you. What precisely is prohibited under תספו? Does the prohibition enjoin one from augmenting an existing mitzvah? In Rashi's words: for instance, by inserting five sections into the tefillin [instead of four], by using five species for the lulav [instead of four], or by attaching five fringes [instead of four]. Alternatively, does it prohibit the addition of new mitzvos not commanded in the Torah?

and the Lord said to me, “It is enough for you; speak to Me no more regarding this matter. 27 Go up to the top of the hill and lift up your eyes westward and northward and southward and eastward and see with your eyes, for you shall not cross this Jordan. 28 But command Joshua and strengthen him and encourage him, for he will cross over before this people, and he will make them inherit the land which you will see. 29 And we abided in the valley opposite Beth Peor.

**4**<sup>1</sup> And now, O Israel, hearken to the statutes and to the judgments which I teach you to do, in order that you may live, and go in and possess the land which the Lord, God of your forefathers, is giving you. <sup>2</sup> Do not add to the word which I command you,\* nor diminish from it, to observe the commandments of the Lord your God which I command you. <sup>3</sup> Your eyes have seen what the Lord did at Baal Peor, for every man who went after Baal Peor, the Lord your God has exterminated from your midst. <sup>4</sup> But you who cleave to the Lord your God are alive, all of you, this day. <sup>5</sup> Behold, I have taught you statutes and ordinances, as the Lord, my God, commanded me,\* to do so in the midst of the land to which you are coming to possess. <sup>6</sup> And you shall keep [them]



In his commentary on this verse, Nachmanides includes both restrictions in the prohibition. Maimonides, too, includes in this prohibition the addition of new *mitzvos* (*Hilchos Mamrim* 2:9). However, Maimonides differs with Nachmanides in maintaining that the prohibition of adding new *mitzvos* applies to *Beis Din* exclusively; if an individual decided to add a *mitzvah* on his own, he would not be violating this norm. Only *Beis Din* has the power to institute legal rulings; were they to institute a new *mitzvah*, they would be promulgating a prohibited legal ruling, and would thus be in violation of this *mitzvah*. In contrast, when performed by an individual, the addition of a *mitzvah* has no meaning, since there is no legal significance to his action. In the case of augmenting details to a *mitzvah*, the prohibition applies to the individual as well, because through his augmentation he has corrupted the *mitzvah* act.

There are two verses in *Deuteronomy* that mention this prohibition: this verse, as well as *Deuteronomy* 13:1: *Everything I command you that you shall be careful to do it. You shall neither add to it [לֹא תִסֶּף עָלָיו], nor subtract from it.* The Vilna Gaon (*Aderes Eliyahu, Parashas Re'eh*) explains that the verse in *Deuteronomy* 4 applies to the prohibition of making up new *mitzvos*, while the verse in *Deut.* 13 prohibits adding to existing *mitzvos*. The plural *תִּסְפוּ* and the singular *תִּסֶּף* are the basis for the dichotomy proposed by the Vilna Gaon. The verse here is worded in the plural, signifying that only through the communal act of *Beis Din* is the addition of *mitzvos* prohibited. The singular use of the verb in *Deuteronomy* 13 refers to augmenting details to *mitzvos*, a prohibition which applies to the individual. (*Reshimos Shiurim – Nedarim* Vol. 1, pp. 182-183)

וְרָאָה לְמִדְתֵּי אֲתֶכֶם הַקִּים וּמִשְׁפָּטִים כַּאֲשֶׁר צִוִּי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי - Behold, I have taught you statutes and ordinances, as the Lord, my God, commanded me. The Gemara in *Nedarim* 37a discusses the source for the prohibition against teaching Torah for pay: The verse states, “...And God commanded at that time that [Torah] be taught to you,” and [another] verse states, “Behold, I have taught you statutes and ordinances, as the Lord, my God, commanded me.” Just as I [Moses] did so for free, so shall you [Israel] do so for free. The last sentence of this passage is ambiguous. Ran interpreted Moses’ statement

וְעִשִׂיתֶם כִּי הוּא חֻמַּתְכֶם וּבִינְתְּכֶם לְעֵינֵי הָעַמִּים  
 אֲשֶׁר יִשְׁמְעוּן אֶת כָּל־הַחֻקִּים הָאֵלֶּה וְאָמְרוּ רַק עִם־  
 חֻקֶּם וְנִבְּוֹן הַגְּדוֹל הַזֶּה: ז פִּי מִי־גֹי גְדוֹל אֲשֶׁר־  
 לוֹ אֱלֹהִים קְרִבִּים אֵלָיו פְּיֵהוּהָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ בְּכָל־קְרִאָנוּ  
 אֵלָיו: ח וּמִי גֹי גְדוֹל אֲשֶׁר־לוֹ חֻקִּים וּמִשְׁפָּטִים צְדִיקִים  
 כְּכֹל הַתּוֹרָה הַזֹּאת אֲשֶׁר אָנֹכִי נֹתֵן לְפָנֵיכֶם הַיּוֹם:  
 וְתַעֲבֹדוּן אֲרֵי הִיא חֻמַּתְכוֹן  
 וְסוֹכְלֵתְנוּתְכוֹן לְעֵינֵי עַמֵּי־אֵי דִי יִשְׁמְעוּן  
 יֵת כָּל קְרִיבֵי־הָאֵלִין וְנִמְרוּן לְחוּד עִם  
 חֻקִּים וְסוֹכְלֵתְנוּ עַמֵּי רַבֵּי־הַדִּין: ז אֲרֵי  
 מִן עִם רַב דִּי לֵה אֱלֹהֵי קְרִיב לֵה לְקַבְּלָא  
 צְלוֹתָהּ בְּעֵדוּ עַקְתָּהּ כִּי אֱלֹהֵי בְּכָל  
 עֵדוּ דְאִנְחָנָא מְצִלּוּן קְדֻמוֹתֵי: ח וּמִן  
 עִם רַב דִּי לֵה קְרִיבֵי וְדִינֵין קְשִׁיטִין כְּכֹל  
 אֲרִיבֵי־הָאֵי דִי אֲנָא יְהִיב קְדֻמִּיכוֹן יוֹמָא דִּין:

ועשיתם. כמשמעו: כי היא חממתכם ובינתכם וגו'. זאת תקצבו חכמים ונזונים לעיני העמים: (ד) חקים ומשפטים צדיקים. הגונים ומקובלים:

as, “Just as I [Moses] *taught* Torah for free, so must you [Israel] *teach* Torah for free.” Ran understood this passage to mean that just as Moses took no money from the Israelites for teaching Torah to them, so too they may not accept money for teaching others.

Maimonides understood this phrase differently. In his words (*Hilchos Talmud Torah* 1:7): *Just as I learned Torah for free [from God]... so must you learn Torah for free [without remunerating the teacher].*

While Ran’s explanation is quite straightforward, Maimonides’ understanding seems strange. How can the concept of payment for teaching services rendered be remotely applied to the Master of the Universe? How can the Gemara compare a flesh-and-blood teacher who benefits from remuneration with God as Teacher, who most certainly does not?

We think that there are many teachers of Torah. Yet there really is only One *Rebbe*, One *Rosh Yeshivah*, One Teacher. The voice of the Holy One resonates within the voice of every teacher of Torah. The Master of the Universe was our Teacher at Sinai, and remains our Teacher through the generations. Maimonides suggests that just as Moses did not pay his Teacher, so are we similarly enjoined. Why? Because his Teacher is the same as ours. (*Derashot Harav*, pp. 217-218)

וְיִשְׁמְרֵתֶם וְעִשִׂיתֶם כִּי הוּא חֻמַּתְכֶם וּבִינְתְּכֶם לְעֵינֵי הָעַמִּים - *And you shall keep [them] and do [them], for that is your wisdom and your understanding in the eyes of the peoples.* The Torah was not given to non-Jews directly, but the Almighty has offered it to all of mankind indirectly—as a promise, a vision, an eschatological expectation, the ultimate end of history. The Torah was given to us so many millennia ago. Our task was and still is to teach the Torah to mankind, to influence the non-Jewish world, to redeem it from an orgiastic way of living, from cruelty and insensitivity, to arouse in mankind a sense of justice and fairness. In a word, we are to teach the world the seven *mitzvos* that are binding on every human being.

But we have also been assigned another mission: to be the message carrier and mentor not only of the seven *mitzvos* that apply to the descendants of Noah, that is, to the human race as a whole, but also of a total outlook on life, the entire moral system to which Jews are committed. The non-Jewish world is expected to take note of the Torah life we lead, to admire our ways, our customs and mores, our *mishpatim* and *chukim*, both our rational and non-rational

and do [them], for that is your wisdom and your understanding in the eyes of the peoples,\* who will hear all these statutes and say, “Only this great nation is a wise and understanding people.” 7 For what great nation is there that has God so near to it, as the Lord our God is at all times that we call upon Him? 8 And which great nation is it that has just statutes and ordinances, as this entire Torah,\* which I set before you this day?

commandments. The Jews must stand out in society as exemplars; our way of life must impress and attract people and fascinate their curiosity. The Jew must always bear witness to his peculiar relationship with God. This principle underlies the commandment of *kiddush Hashem*, sanctification of the divine name, and the prohibition of *chillul Hashem*, desecration of the divine name.

*Matan Torah*, the giving of the Torah, initiated the messianic process of redeeming the world from its crudity and profanity. The Torah was given to the Jew, who was told to disseminate the word of God among pagans, atheists, agnostics, and hedonists, thereby bringing them to their Maker. It is a piecemeal, slow movement, and will be consummated in the messianic era, when *the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established on the top of the mountains* (Is. 2:2). (*Abraham's Journey*, pp. 182-183)

כי מי גוי גדול אשר לו אלהים קרבים אליו ביהוה אלהינו בכל קראנו אליו - For what great nation is there that has God so near to it, as the Lord our God is at all times that we call upon Him? A *goy gadol* distinguishes itself in the area of prayer: as the Lord our God is at all times that we call upon Him. A great nation is a prayerful nation, a nation that knows the secret of prayer. This is also true of individuals: a great person knows the secret of prayer. Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob were great because they were acquainted with prayer. “I shall make you a great nation [*goy gadol*]” (Gen. 12:2)—therefore we say [in the Amidah prayer], “the God of Abraham” (Pesachim 117b).

Prayer represents, first, humility. The insolent person does not know what prayer is. The very foundation of prayer is self-negation and surrender. *As the eyes of servants look to the hand of their master, and as the eyes of a maid to the hand of her mistress, so our eyes wait upon the Lord our God* (Ps. 123:2). The praying person must experience complete dependence upon the Being with whom he intercedes. The main element of prayer is supplication, not hymn. An insolent people is not a great people.

Second, prayer represents a strong sense of sympathy and involvement in the misery and distress of one's fellow man. There is no prayer for the “I” if the “thou” is excluded. By its nature, prayer encompasses others, everyone. A great nation consists of many praying individuals who feel each other's pain, suffer in community, and pray in community. (*Festival of Freedom*, p. 132)

ומי גוי גדול אשר לו חקים ומשפטים צדיקים ככל התורה הזאת - And which great nation is it that has just statutes and ordinances, as this entire Torah. A *goy gadol* also distinguishes itself in the area of righteousness. The people as a whole, as well as the individuals who comprise it, possess a developed sense of and fine sensitivity to justice. Instinctively, they cannot tolerate evil; they hate discriminatory practices and chicanery. If a nation is emotionally capable of approving of injustice, it cannot lay claim to greatness, no matter how powerful it is militarily and economically, or however ingenious it is in matters of science and technology. Real greatness is found in the innate quality of fairness and righteousness, in the spontaneous indignation whenever one is confronted with hypocrisy and selfishness. (*Festival of Freedom*, p. 131)

ט לחוד אסתמר לך וטר נפשך לחדא  
 דילמא תנשי ית פתגמיה די חזו עיניך  
 ודילמא יעדון מלבך כל יומי חייך  
 ותהודענון לבניך ולבני בניך: י יומא די  
 קמתא קדם יי אלהך בחרב פד אמר יי  
 לי פגוש קדמי ית עמא ואשמענון ית  
 פתגמי די ילפון למדחל קדמי כל יומיה  
 די אנון קימיו על ארעא וית גניהון  
 ילפון: יא וקרבתון וקמתון בשפולי  
 טורא וטורא בער באשתא עד צית  
 שמיה חשוכא עננא ואמשתא:

ט רק השמר לך ושמר נפשך מאד פן-תשפח את-  
 הדברים אשר-ראו עיניך ופן-יסורו מלבבך כל ימי  
 חייך והודעתם לבניך ולבני בניך: י יום אשר עמדת  
 לפני יהוה אלהיך בחרב באמר יהוה אלי הקהל-  
 לי את-העם ואשמעם את-דברי אשר ילמדון  
 ליראה אתי כל-הימים אשר הם חיים על-הארמה  
 ואת-בניהם ילמדון: יא ותקרבו ותעמדון תחת ההר  
 וההר בער באש עד-לב השמים השד ענן וערפל:

עמדת. מוסב על מקרא שלמעלה ממנו, אשר ראו עיניך  
 יום אשר עמדת בחרב, אשר ראיתם את הקולות ואת  
 הלפידים: ילמדון. ילפון לעצמם: ילמדון. ילפון לאחרים:  
 (ט) רק השמר לך וגו' פן תשפח את הדברים. או כשלא  
 תשכחו אותם ותעשו על אמתתם תחשבו חכמים ונבונים,  
 ואם תעומו אותם מתוך שכחה תחשבו שוטים: (י) יום אשר

and you shall make them known to your children and to your children's children, the day you stood before the Lord your God at Horeb. Torah study involves awe and fear, as described in the Gemara (Berachos 22a): [It is written] "and you shall make them known to your children and to your children's children," and following that it is written: "the day you stood before the Lord your God at Horeb." Just as at Horeb there was dread and awe, trembling and fear, so too here [with respect to the study of Torah] it must be done with dread and awe, trembling and fear.

Why should Torah study call for fear and dread? Isn't Torah to be learned to gain insight and understanding? Isn't the ultimate goal of Torah study to assimilate the Torah's worldview into one's personality? Why the need for awe, for trembling?

These emotions are appropriate because the study of Torah is a reenactment of the giving of the Torah, and the teacher is but a mouthpiece for the Giver. For this reason, both Torah and prayer are *Avodah Shebalev*. Both involve standing before God. Prayer—because man's need-awareness is so acute that he cannot keep himself from addressing the King of Kings in prayer. Torah study—because God alone is our Teacher, the *melamed Torah le'amo Yisrael*.

The study of Torah constitutes continuous revelation. The purpose of reading the Torah aloud in the synagogue is not solely to teach the congregation, but also to arrange an encounter with God, as experienced by our ancestors at Mount Sinai. Every act of reading from the Torah is a new giving of the Torah, a revival of the wondrous stand at the foot of the flaming mountain. The reading of the Torah is a "staging" of the giving of the Torah and a renewal of the awesome, sublime experience. The revelational experience is reenacted whenever the Torah scroll is removed from the ark [for reading in the synagogue]. The person who is called up to the Torah utters a formula of sanctification ("Bless the blessed Lord") before the prescribed benediction. Why does he not simply begin with the benediction itself? The reading of the Torah contains

9 But beware and watch yourself very well, lest you forget the things that your eyes saw, and lest these things depart from your heart, all the days of your life, and you shall make them known to your children and to your children's children, 10 the day you stood before the Lord your God at Horeb,\* when the Lord said to me, "Assemble the people for Me, and I will let them hear My words, that they may learn to fear Me all the days that they live on the earth, and that they may teach their children. 11 And you approached and stood at the foot of the mountain, and the mountain burned with fire up to the midst of the heavens, with darkness, a cloud, and opaque darkness.

an element of revelation of the *Shechinah*, and whenever or wherever man feels the presence of the Holy One, Blessed be He, he is obligated to sanctify God's name and praise Him: *Then shall all the trees of the forest shout for joy at the presence of the Lord, for He is coming, for He is coming to rule the earth (I Chron. 16:33).*

R. Meir of Rothenburg's stringency of standing during the synagogue reading of the Torah is based on this principle. Moreover, even when the Torah is studied by individuals, there is an element of the revelation of the *Shechinah*. A master who has heard the Torah is filled with living, revelational content. He impresses his disciples not only by narrating and understanding the vision as an intellectual act, but also by uniting spiritually with them and by bestowing of his personal glory upon them. (*Derashot Harav*, pp. 219-220; *From There Shall You Seek*, pp. 139-141)

Based on the juxtaposition of *and you shall make them known to your children and to your children's children* to the phrase *the day you stood before the Lord your God at Horeb*, Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi (*Kiddushin* 30a) concludes that if one teaches his grandson Torah, it is considered as if he received the Torah directly from Sinai. This implies that there is an added element to teaching Torah to one's grandson, yet Maimonides rules (*Hilchos Talmud Torah* 1:2) that one has a greater obligation to teach his son Torah than his grandson. Why then does Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi only compare teaching one's grandson to this sublime experience, and not teaching one's son as well?

Nachmanides derives from this verse, *watch yourself very well, lest you forget the things that your eyes saw, and lest these things depart from your heart... and you shall make them known to your children and to your children's children*, that there is a both a positive and negative commandment never to forget the revelation at Sinai and to pass it on to the next generation. In his list of *mitzvos* omitted from Maimonides' *Sefer Hamitzvos*, Nachmanides writes that although the Gemara in *Kiddushin* cites this verse in regard to the obligation of Torah study, it is in fact an independent *mitzvah*. Maimonides, who does not count this *mitzvah*, nevertheless agrees that there is an obligation to always remember the revelation at Sinai, but maintains that this is a component of Torah study.

Based on this, it would seem that with regard to the obligation of teaching Torah, one's son has precedence over one's grandson. But with regard to the obligation of passing on the memory of Sinai, the link between grandfather and grandson is stronger because it is the grandfather who stands closer to Sinai. This is why Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi specifically compares one who teaches one's grandson Torah to one who received it from Sinai. (*Mipeninei Harav*, p. 406; *Harrerei Kedem*, Vol. 2, pp. 256-258)

יב ומליל יי עמכו מגו אשתא קל פתגמיו אתון שמעיו ודמות ליתכו חנו אלהו קלא: יג וחיו לבו ית קנמה די פקיד יתכו למעבד עשרא פתגמיו וכתבנו על תריו לחיו אבניא: יד ותי פקיד יי בעדנא תהיא לאלפא יתכו קמיו ודינו למעבדכו יתהו בארעא די אתון עבריו תמן למירתה: טו ותסתמרו לחדא לנפשתיכו ארי לא חיותו כל דמות ביומא די מליל יי עמכו בחרב מגו אשתא: טז דילמא תחבלו ותעבדו לבו צלם דמות כל צורא דמות דבר או נקבא: ז דמות כל בעורא די בארעא דמות כל צפר גדפא די פרח באור רקיע שמיא: יח דמות כל רחשא די בארעא דמות כל נוני די במיא מלרע לארעא: יט ודילמא תקופ עיניך לשמיא ותחיו ית שמיא וית סיהרא וית פוכביא כל חילי שמיא ותשעי ותסגוד להו ותלהנו די זמיו יי אלהו ותהו לכל עממיא תחת כל שמיא: כ ויתכו קריב יי לדחתה ואפק יתכו מפגרא דפרולא ממצרים למחוי לה לעמא אחסנא ביומא דהו:

יב וידבר יהוה אליכם מתוך האש קול דברים אתם שמעים ותמונה אינכם ראים זולתי קול: יג ויגד לכם את-בריתו אשר צוה אתכם לעשות עשרת הדברים וכתבם על-שני לוחות אבנים: יד ואתי צוה יהוה בעת ההוא ללמד אתכם חקים ומשפטים לעשותכם אתם בארץ אשר אתם עברים שמה לרשתה: טו ונשמרתם מאד לנפשתיכם כי לא ראיתם כל-תמונה ביום דבר יהוה אליכם בחרב מתוך האש: טז פן-תשחתו ועשיתם לכם פסל תמונת כל-סמל תבנית זכר או נקבה: יז תבנית כל-בהמה אשר בארץ תבנית כל-צפור כנף אשר תעוף בשמים: יח תבנית כל-רמש באדמה תבנית כל-דגה אשר-במים מתחת לארץ: יט ופן-תשא עיניך השמימה וראית את-השמש ואת-הירח ואת-הפוכבים כל צבא השמים ונדחת ונשחתה והשתחית להם ועבדתם אשר חלק יהוה אלהיך אתם לכל העמים תחת כל-השמים: כ ואתכם לקח יהוה ויצא אתכם מפור הברזל ממצרים להיות לו לעם נחלה ביום הזה:

(יד) ואותי צוה ה' בעת ההיא ללמד אתכם. מורה שזעל פה: (טז) סמל. מורה: (יט) ופן תשא עיניך. להסתכל בדבר ולתת לב לטעות אחריהם: אשר חלק ה' וגו' לכל העמים. (כ) מכור. כור הוא כלי שמוקקין בו את הזהב להאיר להם. דבר אחר, לאלוהות, לא מנעו מלטעות אחריהם אלא החליקם בדברי הנביא לטורדס מן העולם, וכן הוא אומר (תהלים ל, א) כי תחליק אליו צעניו למלא עונו לשגא.

וּפְּנֵי תִשָּׂא עֵינֶיךָ הַשְּׁמַיִם וּרְאִיתָ אֶת הַשֶּׁמֶשׁ וְאֶת הַיָּרֵחַ וְאֶת הַכּוֹכָבִים כֹּל צְבָא הַשְּׁמַיִם וְנִדְחַתָּ וְנִשְׁחַתְתָּ וְהִשְׁתַּחֲוִיתָ לָהֶם וְעַבַדְתָּם אֲשֶׁר חָלַק יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ אֶתְּכֶם לְכָל הָעַמִּים תַּחַת כָּל-הַשָּׁמַיִם: כ וְאֶתְכֶם לָקַח יְהוָה וַיֹּצֵא אֶתְכֶם מִפּוֹר הַבְּרִזָּל מִמִּצְרַיִם לְהִיְתוֹת לוֹ לְעַם נַחֲלָה בַּיּוֹם הַזֶּה:

וּפְּנֵי תִשָּׂא עֵינֶיךָ הַשְּׁמַיִם וּרְאִיתָ אֶת הַשֶּׁמֶשׁ וְאֶת הַיָּרֵחַ וְאֶת הַכּוֹכָבִים כֹּל צְבָא הַשְּׁמַיִם וְנִדְחַתָּ וְנִשְׁחַתְתָּ וְהִשְׁתַּחֲוִיתָ לָהֶם - *And lest you lift up your eyes to heaven, and see the sun, and the moon, and the stars, all the host of heaven... and be drawn away to prostrate yourselves before them and worship them.* In the poem *E-l Adon* recited on Shabbos morning, we encounter the phrase: פַּחַ וּגְבוּרָה נָתַן בָּהֶם, which should be understood to mean, He endowed the astral bodies with the power to determine the dynamics of the cosmos. עֲשִׂים בְּאִמְרָה רְצוֹן קוֹנֵם: They praise God through their compliance with His will embedded within them. By discharging their functions, by complying with the laws of physics, they serve the Almighty.

Nevertheless, man has no right to extol them. Judaism was aware and was impressed with

12 The Lord spoke to you out of the midst of the fire; you heard the sound of the words, but saw no image, just a voice. 13 And He told you His covenant, which He commanded you to do, the Ten Commandments, and He inscribed them on two stone tablets. 14 And the Lord commanded me at that time to teach you statutes and ordinances, so that you should do them in the land to which you are crossing, to possess. 15 And you shall watch yourselves very well, for you did not see any image on the day that the Lord spoke to you at Horeb from the midst of the fire. 16 Lest you become corrupt and make for yourselves a graven image, the representation of any form, the likeness of male or female, 17 the likeness of any beast that is on the earth, the likeness of any winged bird that flies in the heaven, 18 the likeness of anything that crawls on the ground, the likeness of any fish that is in the waters, beneath the earth. 19 And lest you lift up your eyes to heaven, and see the sun, and the moon, and the stars, all the host of heaven, which the Lord your God assigned to all peoples under the entire heaven, and be drawn away to prostrate yourselves before them and worship them.\* 20 But the Lord took you and brought you out of the iron crucible, out of Egypt,\* to be a people of His possession, as of this day.

the beauty of the cosmos, as evidenced by the Psalm *Borchi Nafshi* (Ps. 104). The cosmos is the mirror in which God's glory is reflected; but to worship the cosmos is akin to worshipping the mirror. (Boston, 1973)

וַאֲתַתְּכֶם לְקַח יְהוָה וַיּוֹצֵא אֶתְכֶם מִכּוּר הַבְּרִזָּל מִמִּצְרַיִם – *But the Lord took you and brought you out of the iron crucible, out of Egypt.* Rashi explains that the “iron crucible” designates a vessel used for refining gold. The suffering in Egypt apparently was intended to refine and cleanse the Jewish character, to remove the dross of moral impurities and to heighten ethical sensitivity. This metaphor was echoed by the prophet Isaiah: *Behold I have refined you, but not as silver; I have chosen for you the crucible of poverty* (Is. 48:10). The Egyptian exile may thus be viewed as a necessary experience which molded the moral quality of the Jewish people for all time.

Whenever the Torah wishes to impress upon us the *mitzvah* of having compassion and sympathy for the oppressed in society, it reminds us of our similar helplessness and lowly status during our bondage in Egypt. The most defenseless elements in society are usually the slaves, strangers (proselytes), widows, and orphans, and we are repeatedly enjoined by the Torah to be sensitive to their plight: *You shall not pervert the judgment of a stranger or an orphan, and you shall not take a widow's garment as security [for a loan]. You shall remember that you were a slave in Egypt, and the Lord, your God, redeemed you from there; therefore, I command you to do this thing* (24:17-18). The stranger, in particular, personifies the helpless one who has no family or friends to intercede on his behalf. For this reason, as the Talmud indicates, the Torah exhorts us in thirty-six Scriptural references to treat the stranger kindly (*Bava Metzia* 59b).

The Egyptian experience may be regarded as the fountainhead and moral inspiration for the teaching of compassion which is so pervasive in Jewish law. It sharpened the Jew's ethical sensitivity and moral awareness. The Midrash has R. Nechemiah say this explicitly: *The Egyptian bondage was of great value for us, since it served to implant within us the quality of kindness and mercy* (*Mechilta DeRashbi* 13:3). Ours is a singularly ethical culture, which expresses itself through a

כא ומו קדם יי הוה רגז עלי על פתגמיכון וקנים גדיל דלא למעבר ית ירדנא ובדיל דלא למיעל לארעא טבא די יי אלקהד יחב לה אחסנא: כב ארי אנא מאית בארעא הדא לית אנא עבר ית ירדנא ואתון עברין ויתרתון ית ארעא טבא הדא: כג אסתמרו לכו דילמא תתנשון ית קמא דיין אלקכו די גזר עמכו ותעבדון לכו צלם דמות כלא די פקדד יי אלקהד: כד ארי יי אלקהד מימרה אשא אכלא הוא אל קנא: כה ארי תולדון בניו ובני בניו ותתעתקון בארעא ותחבלון ותעבדון צלם דמות כלא ותעבדון דבשי קדם יי אלקהד לארנא קדמוהי: כו אסהדית בכו וקא דיין ית שמיא וית ארעא ארי מיבד תיבדון בפריע מעל ארעא די אתון עברין ית ירדנא לתמן למירתה לא תורכוו וימון עלה ארי אשתצצה תשתצו: כז ויבדר יי יתכוו בעממיא ותשתארוו עם דמנו בעממיא די ידבר יי יתכוו לתמן: כח ותפלחון תמן לעממיא פלחי טענתא עבד ידי אנשא אעא ואבנא די לא יחוון ולא שמעיו ולא אכליו ולא מריחיו:

כא ויהוה התאנף בי על-דבריכם וישבע לבלתי עברי את-הירדן ולבלתי-בא אל-הארץ הטובה אשר יהוה אלהיך נתן לה נחלה: כב כי אנכי מת בארץ הזאת אינני עבר את-הירדן ואתם עברים וירשתם את-הארץ הטובה הזאת: כג השמרו לכם פן-תשפחו את-ברית יהוה אלהיכם אשר פרת עמכם ועשיתם לכם פסל תמונת פל אשר צוה יהוה אלהיך: כד כי יהוה אלהיך אש אכלה הוא אל קנא: כה כה פיתוליד בנים ובני בנים ונושנתם בארץ והשחתם ועשיתם פסל תמונת פל ועשיתם הרע בעיני-יהוה אלהיך להכעיסו: כו העידתי בכם היום את-השמים ואת-הארץ פיאבד תאבדון מהר מעל הארץ אשר אתם עברים את-הירדן שמה לרשתה לא-תאריכו ימים עליה כי השמד תשמדון: כז והפיץ יהוה אתכם בעמים ונשארתם מתי מספר בגוים אשר ינהג יהוה אתכם שמה: כח ועבדתם-שם אלהים מעשה ידי אדם עץ ואבן אשר לא-יראו ולא ישמעון ולא יאכלון ולא יריחו:

ושמים שנה, כמנין ונושנתם, והוא הקדים והגלס לסוף שמונה מאות וחמשים, והקדים שמי שנים לנושנתם, כדי שלא יתקיים זהם פי אבד תאבדון (פסוק כו), וזה שנאמר (דניאל ט, יד) וישקד ה' על הקעה ויצאקה עלינו פי לדיק ה' אלהינו, נדקה עשה עמנו שמהר להצילה שמי שנים לפני זמנה: (כו) העידתי בכם. הנני מזמינם להיות עדים שהתיתי זכס: (כז) ועבדתם שם אלהים. כחגומו. משאתם עובדים לעובדיהם כאילו אתם עובדים להם:

(כא) התאנף. נתמלא רוגז: על דבריכם. על אודותיכם, על עסקיכם: (כב) כי אנכי מת וגו' אינני עובר. מאחר שמת מהיכן יעבור, אלא אף עזמותי אינם עוזרים: (כג) תמונת כל. תמונת כל דבר: אשר צוה ה'. אשר צוה שלא לעשות: (כד) אל קנא. מקנא לנקום, אנפרדמניט בלע"ו, מתמרה על רוגזו להפרע מעובדי עבודה זרה: (כה) ונושנתם. רמז להם שיגלו ממנה לסוף שמונה מאות וחמשים עובדים לעובדיהם כאילו אתם עובדים להם:

heightened regard for human rights and dignity. *Kevod haberiyos* (respect for human dignity) and social justice are implicit in the Biblical concept that man was created in God's image.

To this day, even Jews who are alienated from religious practice seem more responsive than Gentiles to causes which affect mankind. There are crimes which come harder to a Jew than to others. This may sound chauvinistic, but it is statistically true. Murder and physical violence were unheard of among Jews in the past, and are still proportionately rare among those who

21 And the Lord was angry with me because of you, and He swore that I would not cross the Jordan and that I would not come into the good land the Lord, your God, is giving you as an inheritance. 22 For I will die in this land; I will not cross the Jordan. You, however, will cross, and you will possess this good land. 23 Beware, lest you forget the covenant of the Lord your God, which He made with you, and make for yourselves a graven image, the likeness of anything, which the Lord your God has forbidden you. 24 For the Lord your God is a consuming fire, a zealous God. 25 When you beget children and children's children, and you will be long established in the land, and you become corrupt and make a graven image, the likeness of anything, and do evil in the eyes of the Lord your God, to provoke Him to anger, 26 I call as witness against you this very day the heaven and the earth, that you will speedily and utterly perish from the land\* to which you cross the Jordan, to possess; you will not prolong your days upon it, but will be utterly destroyed. 27 And the Lord will scatter you among the peoples, and you will remain few in number among the nations to where the Lord will lead you. 28 And there you will worship gods, man's handiwork, wood and stone, which neither see, hear, eat, nor smell.



have any roots in their heritage. Embezzlement and cheating in financial matters may entice Jews vulnerable to the temptations of money and riches; but rarely homicide, which occurs so frequently in other cultures. (*Reflections*, Vol. 1, pp. 189-191)

— העידתי בכם היום את השמים ואת הארץ כי אבד תאבדון מהר מעל הארץ - *I call as witness against you this very day the heaven and the earth, that you will speedily and utterly perish from the land.* Why was it necessary for Moses to say that the heaven and the earth, the natural world, as it were, would be the witnesses? If Moses had said, “I call the Lord to testify against you this day,” it would imply that the people’s exile from *Eretz Yisrael* was a punishment by *Hakadosh Baruch Hu* for the sin of idolatry, for non-compliance with the Torah. After all, the positive and negative commandments in the Torah are all provided with sanctions or penalties.

But exile from *Eretz Yisrael* is not a punishment. The land itself, by its nature, does not tolerate sinners. Imagine trying to plant a fruit from a subpolar region in *Eretz Yisrael*. You will fail; it is impossible. You cannot raise plants in *Eretz Yisrael* that need a different climate or different geographic conditions. Similarly, *Eretz Yisrael* simply does not tolerate sin. It rejects sinners the way organisms reject certain foods, or the way certain climates will reject the palm, should you try to plant it there. It is not a punishment; it is a natural consequence.

If it were a punishment, we could say that *Hakadosh Baruch Hu* is full of grace and mercy; He will wait until the last day for the sinner to come back. There is always solace in the fact that *Hakadosh Baruch Hu* is the one who punishes, for He is full of grace. He has unlimited patience, and maybe He will forgive. But not in this case, says Moses. Here the land will simply throw you out. A person who eats food he cannot digest will vomit, whether he wants to or not. An organism rejects foreign bodies that it cannot digest. Climatically, naturally, geographically, *Eretz Yisrael* cannot tolerate sinners. Moses says, *I call as witness against you this very day the heaven and the earth.* “I turn it over to them,” he says. “The results are up to them. *Hakadosh Baruch Hu* will not interfere. Even if He is ready to forgive, even if He is willing to wait, the heaven and the earth have no patience. They cannot wait.” (*The Lord is Righteous*, pp. 74-75)

כט ובקשתם משם את־יהוה אלהיך ומצאתָ כִּי  
 תִּדְרְשֵׁנוּ בְּכָל־לִבְבְּךָ וּבְכָל־נַפְשֶׁךָ: לֹא בִצָר לָךְ וּמְצָאוֹךָ  
 כָּל הַדְּבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה בְּאַחֲרֵית הַיָּמִים וְשִׁבְתָּ עַד־יְהוָה  
 אֱלֹהֶיךָ וְשָׁמַעְתָּ בְּקוֹלִי: לֹא כִּי אֵל רַחוּם יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ  
 כט ותתבעו מתמו דחלתא די אלהא  
 ותשפח ארי תבעי מן קדמוהי בכל לבך  
 ובכל נפשך: לא כד יעזב לך וישכחך כל  
 פתגמא האלון בסוף ימיה ותשוב  
 לדחלתא די אלהא ותקבל למימרה:  
 לא ארי אלהא רחמנא ׀ אלהא

— And from there you will seek the Lord your God, and you will find Him, if you seek Him with all your heart and with all your soul. Judaism knows well the tensions and hesitations involved in the wearying search for God, as well as the joy and ecstasy of the search. All the prophets called upon us to observe creation, to search out the secrets of the cosmic process, to observe the well-springs of the world, and to uncover the hidden and obscure—the glory of the Creator’s majesty, which hovers over mute creation. They all wove laurels for the searchers after God, both for those who seek Him within “mechanical” nature, in its gray opacity, and for those who tear open the window to the wondrous higher realms of pure, utterly perfect being. *The heavens declare the glory of God, the sky proclaims His handiwork* (Ps. 19:2), declares the sweet singer of Israel. *How many are the things You have made, O Lord; You have made them all with wisdom; the earth is full of Your creations* (Ps. 104:24), he calls out from the enthusiasm of the soul, cloaked in the holy spirit, the soul that yearns for God and beholds a vision of the Almighty. King David views creation primally, seeing the likeness of the Creator reflected in everything, and sings a majestic song. And on the nights preceding the High Holy Days, when the Jewish people recite their penitential prayers [selichos], the beloved clings to her lover and pleads with Him that her request should not be in vain, and that He should present Himself to her when she goes out to greet Him. A whispered plea bursts forth and rises with the morning star that appears on the eastern horizon: *Present Yourself to us when we seek You, as it is written, “And from there you will seek the Lord your God, and you will find Him, if you seek Him with all your heart and with all your soul.”* Master of the Universe, behold, we search for and seek You with all our being, we long for You with every beat of our hearts, we run after You. You attract us with an awesome, enormous power that no one can withstand. We hear Your footsteps; You are very, very near to us. Please be here with us now, tonight, the night of penitential prayers, the night clothed in secret and mystery, the night of extensive grace and manifold mercies. Please appear when we seek You.

The *halachah* approves of this confrontation between God and man within the world. We are commanded to utter a benediction over every cosmic phenomenon: over the afterglow of the fiery sunset and the purple of the sunrise trickling along the mountaintops; over the rising moon sprinkling its pale light; over the stars in their courses and the comets leaping from clear space; over the sight of the rainbow in the clouds; over the thunder and lightning arising from mist; over the budding trees and the sweet-smelling exquisite flowers; over the murmur of the ocean and the rushing of the surf; upon eating water and bread, the fruits of the trees and the crops of the fields; over the healthy body, created with wisdom, with its muscles and nerves; over the ability to move and to stand erect. In short, we utter a benediction over everything man encounters that demonstrates the power of creation. What is a benediction—whether

29 And from there you will seek the Lord your God, and you will find Him, if you seek Him with all your heart and with all your soul.\* 30 When you are distressed, and all these things happen upon you in the end of days, then you will return to the Lord your God\* and obey Him. 31 For the Lord your God is a merciful God;

*birkas hanehenin*, a blessing over something we imbibe, or *birkas re'iyah*, a blessing over something we behold—if not praise and thanksgiving to God for the nature of the world, a nature that changes, in the instant that the benediction is uttered, into a supernatural, miraculous universe; if not the redemption of nature from its muteness, deprivation, and solitude; if not the identification of the cosmic dynamics with the primordial will of the Creator, which is hidden and acts from within its hiding place on organic and inorganic matter, on animal, vegetable, and mineral! What does the benediction attest to if not the strange fact that—in spite of the psychological law that habit and custom dull the subtleties of feeling, dim the alertness of the intellect, and extinguish the flame of ecstasy—the Jew is enthusiastic about each and every phenomenon? (*From There Shall You Seek*, pp. 19-21)

בְּצַר לְךָ וּמְצָאוּךָ כָּל הַדְּבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה בְּאַחֲרֵית הַיָּמִים וְשָׁבַת עַד יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ - When you are distressed, and all these things happen upon you in the end of days, then you will return to the Lord your God. Afflictions come to elevate a person, to purify and sanctify his spirit, to cleanse and purge it of the dross of superficiality and vulgarity, to refine his soul and to broaden his horizons. In a word, the function of suffering is to mend that which is flawed in an individual's personality. The *halachah* teaches us that the sufferer commits a grave sin if he allows his troubles to go to waste and remain without meaning or purpose. Suffering occurs in the world in order to contribute something to man, in order that atonement be made for him, in order to redeem him from corruption, vulgarity, and depravity. From out of its midst the sufferer must arise ennobled and refined, clean and pure. *It is a time of agony unto Jacob, but out of it he shall be saved* (Jer. 30:7); from out of the very midst of the agony itself he will attain eternal salvation. The agony will serve to form and shape his character so that he will, thereby, reach a level of exaltedness not possible in a world bereft of suffering. Out of the negation grows the affirmation, out of the antithesis the thesis blossoms forth, and out of the abrogation of reality there emerges a new reality. The Torah itself bears witness to man's powerful spiritual reaction to any trouble that may befall him. Suffering imposes upon man the obligation to return to God in complete and wholehearted repentance. Afflictions are designed to bestir us to repent, and what is repentance if not man's self-renewal and his supernal redemption?

Woe unto the man whose suffering has not precipitated a spiritual crisis in the depths of his being, whose soul remains frozen and lacking forgiveness! Woe unto the sufferer if his heart is not inflamed by the fires of affliction, if his pangs do not kindle the lamp of the Lord that is within him! If a person allows his pains to wander about the vast empty spaces of the cosmos like blind, purposeless forces, then a grave indictment is drawn up against him for having frittered away his suffering. (*Kol Dodi Dofek*, pp. 56-57)

Homeless man was commanded to pray. בְּצַר לְךָ, *When you are distressed...* What sort of distress? Homelessness. Little homeless man has a need for prayer because he is frightened by his vulnerability and his exposure to an unfriendly nature. Great homeless man prays for fulfillment and total realization. Both are questing for God, even though from time to time the quest

לא ישבִקְנֶדָה וְלֹא יחַבְלֶנָה וְלֹא יתְנַשֵּׂי יָת קִימָא דְאַבְרָהָם דִּי קָיִים לְהוּן: לֵב אֲרִי שָׂאֵל קַעֵן לְיוֹמָיָא קְדָמָי דְהוּוּ קְדָמָד לְמֹן יוֹמָא דִּי בְרָא יִי אָדָם עַל אֲרַעָא וְלִמְסִיפֵי שְׂמִיָּא וְעַד סִיפֵי שְׂמִיָּא הִהוּהּ כְּפִתְגָמָא רַבָּא הֲדִין אוּ הִיאֲשֵׁתְמַע כְּוַתְּהָ: לֵב הִשְׁמַע עֲמָא קַל מִימְרָא דִּין מְמַלֵּל מְגוּ אֲשֵׁתָא כְּמָא דִּי שְׁמַעַת אֵת וְיִתְקִים: לֵב אוּ נְסִין דִּי עֲבַד יִי לֹאֲתַגְלֵאָה לְמִפְרָק לֵה עִם מְגוּ עִם בְּנִסִּין בְּאֲתִין וּבְמוֹפְתִין וּבְקַרְבָּא וּבִידָא תְקִיפָא וּבְדַרְעָא מְרָמָא וּבְחַזוּנִין רַבְרָבִין כִּכְלֵי דִּי עֲבַד לְכוּן יִי אֱלֹהִיכוֹן בְּמִצְרִים לְעִינֵיהּ:

לֹא יִרְפֶּךָ וְלֹא יִשְׁחִיתֶךָ וְלֹא יִשְׁפַח אֶת־בְּרִית אֲבֹתֶיךָ אֲשֶׁר נִשְׁבַּע לָהֶם: לֵב כִּי שָׂאֵל־נָא לְיָמִים רַאשֵׁינִים אֲשֶׁר־הָיוּ לְפָנֶיךָ לְמֹן־הָיוּם אֲשֶׁר בְּרָא אֱלֹהִים | אָדָם עַל־הָאָרֶץ וְלִמְקַצֵּה הַשָּׁמַיִם וְעַד־קַצֵּה הַשָּׁמַיִם הִנְהִיחַ כְּדָבָר הַגְּדוֹל הַזֶּה אוּ הִנְשִׁמַּע כְּמָהוּ: לֵב הִשְׁמַע עִם קוֹל אֱלֹהִים מְדַבֵּר מִתּוֹךְ־הָאֵשׁ כְּאֲשֶׁר־ שְׁמַעַת אֵתְהָ וּיְחִי: לֵב אוּ | הִנְסָה אֱלֹהִים לְבוֹא לְקַחַת לֹו גוֹי קָרֵב גוֹי בְּמִסַּת בְּאֵתוֹת וּבְמוֹפְתִים וּבְמִלְחָמָה וּבִיד חֲזָקָה וּבְזָרוּעַ נְטוּיָה וּבְמוֹרָאִים גְּדֹלִים כִּכְלֵי אֲשֶׁר־עִשָּׂה לָכֶם יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם בְּמִצְרַיִם לְעִינֵיךָ:

תרי טעמי

הנחיה כדבר הגדול הזה. מהו הדבר הגדול, השמע עם וגו': (לד) הנסה אלהים. הכי עשה נסים שום אלוה לנא לקחת לו גוי וגו'. כל ההי"ן הללו תמיהות הן, לכך נקודות הן צחטף פת"ח, הנהיה, הנשמע, השמע, הנסה: במסת. על ידי נסיונות הודיעם גבורותיו, כגון הקפ"ר עלי (שמות ט, ה) אם אוכל לעשות כן, הרי זה נסיון: באתת. צסימנין, להאמין שהוא שלוחו של מקום, כגון מה זה ז' צ' צ' (שם ד, ט): ובמופתים. הם נפלאות, שהביא עליהם מכות מופלאות: ובמלחמה. ציס, שנאמר (שם יד, כה) כי ה' נלחם להם:

(לג) לא ירפך. מלהחזיק בך צידיו. ולשון לא ירפך לשון לא יפעיל הוא, לא יתן לך רפיון, לא יפריש אותך מאללו, וכן פת"פיו ולא פת"פיו (שה"ש ג, ד) שלא ננקד פת"פיו. כל לשון רפיון מוסב על לשון מפעיל ומתפעל, כמו הקפה לה (מלכים ב ד, טו) מן לה רפיון, ה' צ' מ' (להלן ט, יד) התרפה ממני: (לד) לימים ראשונים. על ימים ראשונים: ולמקצה השמים. וגם שאל לכל הברואים אשר מקצה אל קצה, זהו פשוטו. ומדרשו, מלמד על קומתו של אדם שהיתה מן הארץ עד השמים, והוא השיעור עצמו אשר מקצה אל קצה:

is misunderstood by man. He may erroneously think that what he is searching for is another field, another million dollars, another luxury. In fact, he is searching for the *Ribbono shel olam*. And how can you find the *Ribbono shel olam*? The road to Him winds through prayer. Homeless man, in his quest for a home, is questing for God, whom he can reach only through prayer.

In prayer both great man and small man find their home. Through prayer great man finds home, peace, and serenity, and through prayer small man liberates himself from his fright, the dread in the night. Unfortunately, the modern Jew does not know how to pray. The experience of returning home the very moment one starts to read his prayers is unknown to the modern Jew.

I remember that as a small child, I was raised in a *Chabad* town where there was a synagogue called the *Alter Chassidische Shul*. There was a tradition that the founder of *Chabad*, the *Ba'al Hatanya* Rav Shneur Zalman, once prayed in that *shul*. There was indeed one seat completely enclosed so that no one could sit in it. This was the seat he supposedly sat in when he passed through the town. He had come to that town with the Russian army, which was being pursued by Napoleon. The population of that town consisted almost exclusively of poor people: workers, tradesmen, particularly peddlers, who used to travel to visit the villages within a fifteen-mile radius of the town. You cannot imagine the primitive conditions in which the Russian peasants lived at the beginning of the twentieth century. After spending a full week in those

*He will not let you loose or destroy you; neither will He forget the covenant of your fathers, which He swore to them. 32 For ask now regarding the early days that were before you, since the day that God created man upon the earth, and from one end of the heavens to the other end of the heavens, whether there was anything like this great thing, or was the likes of it heard? 33 Did ever a people hear God's voice speaking out of the midst of the fire as you have heard, and live? 34 Or has any god performed miracles to come and take him a nation from the midst of a[nother] nation, with trials, with signs, and with wonders, and with war and with a strong hand, and with an outstretched arm, and with great awesome deeds, as all that the Lord your God did for you in Egypt before your eyes?*

primitive shanties, the people used to come home every Friday afternoon. As a child I used to watch them coming into the *shul* one by one, with water glistening from their *payos* and beards because they had immersed in the *mikvah*. I still remember the tune with which they started to recite, immediately upon entering the *shul*, the 107th Psalm. They sang a hymn of gratitude to God. For what? For delivery from captivity, for freeing people from a prison, for freedom; they would cling to God; they came home even though they knew very well that the next day, after sunset, they would return to the primitive villages surrounding the town. The experience of deliverance and redemption represents exactly the idea of prayer. To pray means to allay the fright, the dread in the night; to pray means to return home.

Why does the *halachah* require a house consecrated to prayer? Even a *yachid*, an individual, should try to say his prayers in the synagogue. Why is that necessary? Why not pray in the fields, in the woods, in the streets? God is ubiquitous!

It is not the physical structure which is important. It is not so much the roof and not so much the big galleries and the high windows. These are not important. You know we have never cared about the architecture of the synagogue. People speak a lot about it nowadays, but the *halachah* was not concerned. What is important, according to the *halachah*, is something else. The word *bayis* in Hebrew has a double connotation. *Bayis* means a house, the physical structure, four walls, a roof, and a floor; and *bayis* means a home. We err when we translate *Beis Haknesses* as "the house of prayer." This rendition is not true. There is no need for a house of prayer, because I can pray to God and I can kneel to Him and have a rendezvous with Him anywhere on the globe, even on the outskirts of the universe. I am confronted with God everywhere. *Beis Haknesses* is not a house but a *home* of prayer. The structure is symbolic. *Beis Haknesses*, if understood as a house of prayer, is an institution; however, if translated as a home of prayer, it turns into an exalted idea: the home of man, of homeless man, which is at the same time the home of God.

Solomon, when he dedicated the Temple, asked a pertinent question: *But will God in very truth dwell on the earth? Behold the Heaven and the Heaven of Heavens cannot contain Thee; how much less the house that I have built. (I Kings 8:27)* And what is the answer to this question? The *Beis Hamikdash* is not the home of God, but the home of man where he keeps an appointment with God. God does not need a home for Himself. God feigned homelessness to induce man to build a home for man. And whatever name is assigned to this home is to be understood in terms of human, not divine, homelessness. It is the home of God, because it is the home of man. God comes to that house in order to keep His appointment with man. (*The Synagogue as an Institution and an Idea*, pp. 329-331)

לה את אתחזיקתא למדע ארי יי הוא  
אלהים לית עוד בר מנה: לו מן שמיא  
אשמעך ית קל מימרה לאלפותך ועל  
ארעא אחזקך ית אשתה רבתיא ופתגמוהי  
שמעת מגו אשתא: לו וחלה ארי רחים  
ית אבהתך ואתרעי בגוהי בתרוהי  
ואפקך במימרה בחילה רבא ממצרים:  
לה לתרביא עממין ברבין ותקפיון מגך  
מן מדמך לאעלותך למתן לה ית ארעהון  
אחסנא כיומא הדיו: לט ותדע יומא דין  
ותתוב ללבך ארי יי הוא אלהא דשכנתה  
בשמיא מלעלא ושליש על ארעא מלרע  
לית עוד: מ ותשר ית קמוהי וית פקודוהי  
די אנה מפקדך יומא דין די ייטב לה  
ולבניך בתרך ובדיל דתוריק יומין על  
ארעא די יי אלהך יתב לה כל יומיא:  
מא בנו יפרש משה תלת קרוין בעברא  
דירדנא מדנח שמיא: מב למעירוק תמן  
קטולא די יקטול ית חברה בלא מנדעי  
והוא לא סני לה מאתמלי ומדקמוהי  
וערוק לחד מן קרוינא האליו ויתקם:  
מג ית בצר במדברא בארעא מישרא  
לשבטא דראובן וית ראמות בגלעד  
לשבטא דגד וית גולן במתנן לשבטא  
דמנשה: מד ודא אורייתא די סדר משה  
קדם בני ישראל: מה אליו סהדותא  
וקמיא ודיניא די מליל משה עם בני  
ישראל במפקהון ממצרים: מו בעברא  
דירדנא בחילתא לקבל בית פעור  
בארעא דסיחן מלכא דאמראח די יתב  
בקשבון די מחא משה ובני ישראל  
במפקהון ממצרים: מז ווריתו ית ארעה  
וית ארעא דעוג מלכא דמתנן תרין מלכי  
אמראח די בעברא דירדנא מדנח  
שמיא: מח מערער די על כיה נחלא  
דארנן ועד טורא דשיאן הוא חרמון:  
מט וכל מישרא עברא דירדנא למדינתא  
ועד ימא דמישרא תחות משפך מרמתא:

לה אתה הראת לדעת כי יהוה הוא האלהים אין  
עוד מלבדו: לו מן השמים השמיעך את קלו ליסרה  
ועל הארץ הראך את אשו הגדולה ודבריו שמעת  
מתוך האש: לו ותחת כי אהב את אבותיך ויבחר  
בזרעו אחריו ויוצאך בפניו בכחו הגדל ממצרים:  
לח להורי יש גוים גדלים ועצמים ממך מפניך להביאך  
לתת להך את ארצם נחלה כיום הזה: לט וידעת  
היום והשבת אל לבבך כי יהוה הוא האלהים  
בשמים ממעל ועל הארץ מתחת אין עוד: מ ושמת  
את חקיו ואת מצותיו אשר אנכי מצוך היום אשר  
ייטב לה ולבניך אחריו ולמען תאריך ימים על  
האדמה אשר יהוה אלהיך נתן לה כל הימים: פ  
שלישי מא אז יבדיל משה שלש ערים בעבר הירדן  
מזרחה שמש: מב לנס שמה רוצח אשר ירצח את  
רעהו בבלי דעת והוא לא ישנא לו מתמל שלשם  
ונם אל אחת מן הערים האל וחי: מג את בצר  
במדבר בארץ המישר לראובני ואת ראמת בגלעד  
לגדי ואת גולן בבשן למנשי: מד וזאת התורה אשר  
שם משה לפני בני ישראל: מה אלה העדות והחקים  
והמשפטים אשר דבר משה אל בני ישראל  
בצאתם ממצרים: מז בעבר הירדן בגיא מול בית  
פעור בארץ סיחן מלך האמרי אשר יושב בחשבון  
אשר הפה משה ובני ישראל בצאתם ממצרים:  
מז ויירשו את ארצו ואת ארץ א עוג מלך  
הבשן שני מלכי האמרי אשר בעבר הירדן מזרח  
שמש: מח מערער אשר על שפת נחל ארנן ועד  
תר שיאן הוא חרמון: מט וכל הערבה עבר הירדן  
מזרחה ועד ים הערבה תחת אשדות הפסגה: פ רביעי

35 You have been shown, in order to know that the Lord He is God; there is none else besides Him. 36 From the heavens, He let you hear His voice to instruct you, and upon the earth He showed you His great fire, and you heard His words out of the midst of the fire, 37 and because He loved your forefathers and chose their seed after them, and He brought you out of Egypt before Him with His great strength, 38 to drive out from before you nations greater and stronger than you, to bring you and give you their land for an inheritance, as this day. 39 And you shall know this day and consider it in your heart, that the Lord He is God in heaven above, and upon the earth below; there is none else. 40 And you shall observe His statutes and His commandments, which I command you this day, that it may be well with you and your children after you, and that you may prolong your days upon the earth which the Lord your God gives you forever. 41 Then Moses decided to separate three cities on the side of the Jordan towards the sunrise, 42 so that a murderer might flee there, he who murders his fellow man unintentionally, but did not hate him in time past, that he may flee to one of these cities, so that he might live: 43 Bezer in the desert, in the plain country of the Reubenites, Ramoth in Gilead of the Gadites, and Golan in the Bashan of the Menassites. 44 And this is the teaching which Moses set before the children of Israel: 45 These are the testimonies, statutes and ordinances, which Moses spoke to the children of Israel when they went out of Egypt, 46 on the side of the Jordan in the valley, opposite Beth Peor, in the land of Sihon, king of the Amorites, who dwelt in Heshbon, whom Moses and the children of Israel smote, after they went out of Egypt. 47 And they possessed his land and the land of Og, king of the Bashan, the two kings of the Amorites, who were on the side of the Jordan, towards the sunrise, 48 from Aroer, which is by the bank of the river Arnon, to Mount Sion, which is Hermon, 49 and all the plain across the Jordan eastward as far as the sea of the plain, under the waterfalls of the hill.

כיום הזה. כאשר אתה רואה היום: (מא) אז יבדיל. נתן לך להיות חרד לדבר שיצדלים. ואף על פי שאינן קולטות עד שיצדלו אותן של ארץ כנען, אמר משה מלוא שאפשר לקיימה אקיימנה: בעבר הירדן מורחה שמש. צאטו עבר שצמורטו של ירדן: מורחה שמש. לפי שהוא דבוק נקודה רי"ש צחטף, מורח של שמש, מקום זריחת השמש: (מד) וזאת התורה. זו שהוא עמיד לסדר אשר פרשה זו: (מה) אלה העדות וגו' אשר דבר. הם הם אשר דבר צלחתם ממנרים חור ושנאה להם צערבות מואב: (מו) אשר בעבר הירדן. שהוא צמורת, שהעבר השני היה צמערב:

(לה) הראת. כמרגומו אַתְּתִּיּוֹתָא, כשנתן הקצ"ה את התורה פתח להם שבעה רגיעים, וכשם שקרע את העליונים כך קרע את התחתונים ורלו שהוא יחיד, לכך נאמר אתה הראת לדעת: (לו) ותחת כי אהב. וכל זה תחת אשר אהב: ויוצאך בפניו. כאלה המנהיג בנו לפניו, שנאמר (שמות יד, ט) וַיֵּסַע מִלֶּאֱלֹהִים הַהֶלֶךְ וְגו' וַיֵּלֶךְ מִלְּפָנֶיךָ. ד"א, ויוצאך בפניו, צפני אבותיו, כמו שנאמר (תהלים עח, יג) נֶגְדַת הַצִּבְיֹתָם עָשָׂה פֶלֶא. ואל תתמה על שהזכירם צלשון יחיד, שהרי כתבם צלשון יחיד, ויצטר צורעו אחריו: (לז) כמך מפניך. קרסהו ודרשהו, להוריש מפניך גוים גדולים ועלומים ממך:

א ויקרא משה לכל ישראל ואמר להון  
 שמע ישראל ית קמנא וית דיננא די  
 אנא ממלל קדמיכון יומא דין ותלפון  
 ותהון ותטרון למעבדהון: ב וי אלהנא  
 גזר עמנא קים בחרב: ג לא עם  
 אבהתנא גזר וי ית קמא הדא אלהון  
 עמנא אנחנא אליו הכא יומא דין כלנא  
 קמיו: ד ממלל עם ממלל מליל וי עמכון  
 בטורא מגו אשתא: ה אנא הויתי קאם  
 בין מימרא דין וביניכון בעדנא ההיא  
 לחואה לכוון ית פתגמא דין ארי דחלתון  
 מקדם אשתא ולא סלקתון בטורא  
 למימר: ו אנא וי אלהד די אפקתד  
 מארעא דמצרים מבית עבדותא:  
 ז לא יהי לה אלה אחרון בר מני:

ה א ויקרא משה אל-כל-ישראל ויאמר אלהם שמע  
 ישראל את-החקים ואת-המשפטים אשר אנכי דבר  
 באזניכם היום ולמדתם אתם ושמרתם לעשתם:  
 ב יהוה אלהינו פרת עמנו ברית בחרב: ג לא את-  
 אבותינו פרת יהוה את-הברית הזאת כי אתנו אנחנו  
 אלה פה היום כלנו חיים: ד פנים | בפנים | דבר יהוה  
 עמכם בהר מתוך האש: ה אנכי עמד בין-יהוה  
 וביניכם בעת ההוא להגיד לכם את-דבר יהוה כי  
 יראתם מפני האש ולא-עליתם בהר לאמר: ו  
 אנכי יהוה אלהיך אשר הוצאתיך מארץ מצרים  
 מבית עבדים: ז לא-יהיה לה אלהים אחרים על-פני:

(א) לא את אבותינו. כלל כרת ה' וגו', כי אתנו וגו':  
 (ב) פנים בפנים. אמר רבי זרעיה, כך אמר משה, אל  
 תאמרו אני מטעה אתכם על לא דבר, כדרך שהסוסור  
 עושה צין המוכר לנוקת, הרי המוכר עצמו מדבר  
 עמכם: (ג) לאמר אנכי ה' וגו', ואנכי עומד צין ה' וביניכם:  
 (ד) על פני. כלל מקום אשר אני שם, וזהו כל העולם. דבר  
 אחר, כל זמן שאני קיים. עשרת הדברות כבר פרשמים:

שמע ישראל את החקים ואת המשפטים אשר אנכי דבר באזניכם היום ולמדתם אתם ושמרתם לעשתם - Hear, O Israel, the statutes and ordinances which I speak in your ears this day, and learn them, and observe [them] to do them. There are two aspects to the precept of Talmud Torah. First, the study of Torah is important for the sake of accurate, genuine observance. If you do not know the laws, you are bound to make mistakes in the observance. However, the main aspect of Talmud Torah is not utilitarian. The second aspect of Talmud Torah is purely theoretical, study for the sake of knowledge; no extraneous, practical ends are pursued. For study *per se* is the highest achievement; it cleanses, it redeems, it hallows and it enriches the personality.

While the first aspect of Talmud Torah, the practical one, the duty to study in order to implement, is mentioned in this verse, the duty to study for the sake of knowing has not been spelled out explicitly. There is no source in the Pentateuch which states unequivocally that a person is supposed to study for the sake of studying. The conclusion we may infer from this omission is that there is only one norm: the commandment to teach. To learn does not constitute a separate obligation. Learning is the beginning of teaching. Private study is the prologue to public dissemination of knowledge. I study not to satisfy my strictly intellectual ambition, no matter how noble this ambition is, but to enlighten those who live in darkness. To learn is synonymous with the norm to love. If one is not ready to love, he has no right to learn. I want to understand not because I want to satisfy my intellectual ambition, but because I need to share my wisdom

5<sup>1</sup> And Moses called all Israel and said to them: Hear, O Israel, the statutes and Ordinances which I speak in your ears this day, and learn them, and observe [them] to do them.\* 2 The Lord our God made a covenant with us in Horeb. 3 Not with our forefathers did the Lord make this covenant, but with us, we, all of whom are here alive today. 4 Face to face, the Lord spoke with you at the mountain out of the midst of the fire: 5 (and I stood between the Lord and you at that time, to tell you the word of the Lord, for you were afraid of the fire,\* and you did not go up on the mountain) saying, 6 “I am the Lord your God, Who took you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. 7 You shall not have the gods of others in My presence.

with others in the same fashion as God invites others to participate in His intellectual gesture. There is no separate commandment to learn, because if learning would have been separated from teaching, learning would become a selfish, egocentric gesture.

The Torah never becomes my unqualified possession. I study with God as a representative of those to whom I will pass on my knowledge later. And here, *Yahadus* has formulated the doctrine of educational exotericism. The Torah must be accessible to everybody. The Torah was revealed to the entire congregation; there is no privileged elite, no intellectual aristocracy enjoying special rights or prerogatives. Every Jew deserves to be taught, to join the class. (*Undated Lecture*)

אֲנֹכִי עִמָּד בֵּין יְהוָה וּבֵינֵיכֶם בְּעַת הַהוּא לְהַגִּיד לָכֶם אֶת דְּבַר יְהוָה כִּי יִרְאֶתֶם מִפְּנֵי הָאֵשׁ - I stood between the Lord and you at that time, to tell you the word of the Lord, for you were afraid of the fire. Maimonides (*Hilchos Tefillah* 12:10) writes that the custom from the time of Ezra the Scribe is to employ a *meturgaman* (translator) during the public Torah reading to translate the text into Aramaic, verse by verse, as it was being read (a custom that continued during the time of Maimonides and exists in Yemenite communities today). In the following *halachah* (*Hilchos Tefillah* 12:11), Maimonides writes that the *meturgaman* must “stand in awe and fear” during the reading of the Torah, but he omits any such obligation regarding the Torah reader himself. Maimonides bases his ruling on a passage in the Talmud Yerushalmi (cited by *Kesef Mishneh*), which suggests that our reading of the Torah is a reenactment of the original giving of the Torah at Mount Sinai. Thus, the requirement to “stand in awe and fear,” as the people receiving the Torah stood at Mount Sinai, is applicable only to the *meturgaman*, as he is the one “receiving” the Torah in this scenario. The Torah reader himself, however, acts in the role of God, the Giver of the Torah, in this reenactment, and he therefore does not share this obligation to stand. Maimonides, in a responsum (Blau ed., 2:263) rules that the members of the congregation should sit during the Torah reading. This is based on his view that the members of the congregation do not receive the Torah directly, but rather through the *meturgaman* as an intermediary, and thus also need not stand. The *Shulchan Aruch* (*Orach Chaim* 146:4) also rules that the congregation need not stand during the reading of the Torah. Maharam of Rothenburg (cited by Rama *ibid.*), however, was careful to stand. Arguably, in communities where there is no *meturgaman*, even Maimonides would agree that the congregation must stand during the reading of the Torah. Because the congregation receives the Torah directly from the Torah reader without the *meturgaman* as intermediary, the entire congregation, as the ones “receiving” the Torah in this reenactment, must “stand in awe and fear.” (*Mesorah*, Vol. 9, p. 90)

ח לא תעבד לך צלם כל דמות די בשמיא  
 מלעלא ודי בארעא מלרע ודי במינא  
 מלרע לארעא: ט לא תסגוד להון ולא  
 תפלהנון ארי אנא יי אלהיך אל קנא  
 מסער חובי אבון על בניו מרדין על דר  
 תליתי ועל דר רביעי לשנאי פד משלמין  
 בניא למחטי בתר אבהתהון: י ועבד  
 טיבו לאלפי דרין לרחמי ולנטרי פקודי:  
 יא לא תימי ית שמא דיין אלהיך למנא  
 ארי לא יזפי יי ית די ימי בשמה לשקרא:  
 יב טר ית יומא דשבתא לקדשותה

ח לא-תעשה לך פסל פל-תמונה אשר בשמים  
 ממעל ואשר בארץ מתחת ואשר במים מתחת  
 לארץ: ט לא-תשתחוה להם ולא תעבדם פי אנכי  
 יהוה אלהיך אל קנא פקד עון אבות על-בנים ועל-  
 שלשים ועל-רבעים לשנאי: י ועשה חסד לאלפים  
 לאהבי ולשמרי מצותי: יא לא תשא את-שם  
 יהוה אלהיך לשוא פי לא ינקה יהוה את אשר-ישא  
 את-שמו לשוא: יב שמור את-יום השבת לקדשו

° מצותו כתיב

(יב) שמור. וזראשונות הוא אומר וְכֹר (שמות כ, ט), שניהם נדצור אחד וזמיצה אחת נאמר, ונשמיעה אחת נשמעו.

*You shall not take the name of the Lord, your God, in vain.* When the meteorologist states, “There will be rain tomorrow,” he does not predict the future but predicates of the present: the atmospheric conditions prevailing at present must produce rain sometime soon. His utterance consists of a twofold act: a description of the extant causes, and an explanation of the forthcoming effect via the medium of causalistic necessity. His judgment must be considered either a theoretical truth or a falsity.

The ethical prediction, on the other hand, cannot be classified as a logical proposition, because it predicates of an ethical imperative instead of a fact about reality. When I say, “I shall help my friend,” I do not refer to any causal data which will necessarily produce an effect in the form of a good deed in the future. I shall help my friend, although I am not compelled to do so and I have the alternative to act differently. The ethical prediction cannot be equated with the logical predication, for it does not assert anything real of an object. If my promise does not come true, it renders my prediction not “false,” but a “lie.” In a corresponding way, in this realm “falsity” means vanity and futility.

The immorality of the lie is therefore twofold. The theoretical lie about the real environment is immoral because it distorts facts. The practical lie is immoral because man’s decision, if not realized, is a vain futile act. That is why the terms *shav* (vain) and *sheker* (falsity), used in the two versions of the Decalogue (Ex. 20:7 and this verse), are synonymous: an oath that is false is also vain and useless. Upon this consideration rests the whole legal structure of contractual agreements. The crux of any legal obligation is the validity and binding capacity of the human promise. (*The Emergence of Ethical Man*, pp. 138-140)

Maimonides applies the prohibition in this verse to reciting a blessing in vain, a *berachah levatalah* (*Hilchos Berachos* 1:15). A specific case he cites involves one who made a blessing over a food item which subsequently falls out of his hand and becomes inaccessible. Even if he immediately replaces the lost item of food with something identical, he must recite the formula *Baruch Shem Kevod Malchuso Le’Olam Va’ed* (“Blessed be His glorious kingdom for ever and ever”)

8 You shall not make for yourself a graven image, or any likeness which is in the heavens above, which is on the earth below, or which is in the water beneath the earth. 9 You shall not prostrate yourself before them, nor worship them, for I, the Lord your God, am a zealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the sons, upon the third and the fourth generations of those who hate Me. 10 And [I] perform loving kindness to thousands [of generations] of those who love Me and to those who keep My commandments. 11 You shall not take the name of the Lord, your God, in vain,\* for the Lord will not hold blameless anyone who takes His name in vain. 12 Keep the Sabbath day to sanctify it,\*

and make a new blessing over the second food item. When one uses the *Baruch Shem* formula, he indicates that his original blessing no longer applies to the lost item of food, but is now directed to praising God for creating such food items in a more general sense. As a result, the original blessing is no longer considered a *berachah levatalah*. In contrast, were a woman to mistakenly make the blessing of *shelo asani ishah* (who has not made me a woman), subsequent recitation of *Baruch Shem* would not obviate the *berachah levatalah*, since the blessing is fundamentally untrue, and the *Baruch Shem* formula could not *post facto* transform the blessing into something meaningful. (*Reshimos Shiurim – Maseches Berachos*, pp. 447-449)

שמור את יום השבת לקדשו - Keep the Sabbath day to sanctify it. Nachmanides (*Ex. 20:8*) cites the *Sefer HaBahir* which explains that the two Shabbos commands of *Zachor* and *Shamor*, which appear in the two versions of the *Aseres Hadibros*, relate to two halves of the day: *Shamor* is associated with the nighttime of Shabbos, and *Zachor* with the daytime.

*Hakadosh Baruch Hu* reveals Himself to us through the universe, and sometimes outside and beyond the universe. The kabbalistic concept of *Malchus* or *Shechinah* refers to the presence of God in the universe. Friday night is dedicated to *Shechinah*, as we invoke Creation within our *Ma'ariv* prayer ("You sanctified the seventh day...as the culmination of the creation of heaven and earth... The heavens and earth were completed..."). The *Shechinah* represents the passive, feminine aspect of God, and therefore in the conclusion of the Shabbos blessing in the *Amidah* of Friday night, we refer to Shabbos in the feminine (ויניחיהו ביה). *Shamor*, the attribute of Shabbos night, has the connotation of "waiting," of passively guarding and protecting. God is the *King caught in the tresses [of His Beloved]* (*Song 7:6*). He is held captive, as it were. He chooses to remain obscure. Instead, Israel has been charged with revealing God and publicizing His Name. The *Shechinah* awaits Israel's help, for she cannot set the process of redemption in motion alone. We must take the first step, to open the door and invite the *Shechinah* into our lives. Thus, on Friday evening, we go out to escort the Shabbos queen to us, for she will not come by herself.

The theme of *Shabbos* morning is God in transcendence, when we invoke Mount Sinai in the *Amidah* of *Shacharis* ("...You placed a crown of glory on [Moses'] head when he stood before You on Mount Sinai. He brought down in his hands two tablets of stone..."). On Shabbos day, God reveals Himself as *Malka Kadisha*, the holy king, who awaits no one and needs no assistance. He is the omnipotent Redeemer who can act even before the people repent. This idea is represented by the word *Zachor*, which is related to *zachar*, the male component of God's revelation, which surges forth, active and creative. The theme of Shabbos morning is

כמא די פקדוה יי אלהיה: יג שתא יומיו תפליח ותעבד כל עבדתה: יד ויומא שביעאה שבתא קדם יי אלהיה לא תעבד כל עבדא את וברך וברתה ועבדה ואמתה ותורה וחקרה וכל בעירה וגויריה די קרונה גדיל די ינוח עבדה ואמתה כותה: טו ותדבר ארי עבדא הויתא בארעא דמצרים ואפקה יי אלהיה מתמן בידא תקיפא ובררעא מרמא על כו פקדוה יי אלהיה למעבד ית יומא דשבתא: טז וקר ית אבדו וית אמד כמא די פקדוה יי אלהיה גדיל דיורכו יומיה ובדיל דיוטב לה על ארעא דיי אלהיה יחב לה: יז לא תקטול נפש ולא תגור

כאשר צוה יהוה אלהיה: יג ששת ימים תעבד ועשית כל-מלאכתך: יד ויום השביעי שבת ליהוה אלהיה לא-תעשה כל-מלאכה אתה | ובגה-ובתה ועבדה-ואמתה ושורה וחקרה וכל-בהמתה וגרה אשר בשעריך למען ינוח עבדך ואמתך כמוד: טו וזכרת כי עבד היית בארץ מצרים ויצאך יהוה אלהיה משם ביד חזקה ובזרע נטויה על-פני צוה יהוה אלהיה לעשות את-יום השבת: טז כבד את-אביך ואת-אמך כאשר צוה יהוה אלהיה למען | יאריכו ימיה ולמען ייטב לך על האדמה אשר- יהוה אלהיה נתן לך: טז לא תרצח ט ולא תנאף ט

כאשר צוה. קודם מתן תורה צמרה: (טו) וזכרת כי עבד (טז) כאשר צוה. אף על כבוד אז ואם נלטו צמרה, שנאמר היית וגו'. על מנת כן פדאך, שמהיה לו עבד ותשמור מלומיו: (שמות טו, כה) שם שם לו חק ומשפט: (יז) ולא תנאף. אין לשון נאוף אלא באשם איש:

the revealed *Malka Kadisha*, and in the *Amidah* of Shabbos morning we refer to Shabbos in the masculine gender (וינחמו בו).

These two roles played by the *Shechinah* and *Malka Kadisha* are paralleled by woman and man on earth. The primary role of the woman is represented by the *Shamor* imperative, to safeguard the tradition. In this vein, Sarah protected her son Isaac from being influenced by Ishmael and had him removed from her home. Similarly, Rebecca protected Jacob from Esau's evil designs. In Egypt, righteous women safeguarded the traditions of Israel, and only through their merit was Israel redeemed.

In contrast, man's role is to step forward and expand the boundaries of sanctity: Man is obligated to circumcise his son, to redeem his firstborn and to educate him. These activities are represented by *Zachor*, to remember that we are a Kingdom of Priests and a holy nation. (*Derashot Harav*, p. 9; *Divrei Harav*, pp. 274-275; *Harrerei Kedem*, Vol. 3, p. 299)

— And you shall remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt, and that the Lord your God took you out from there. While the Exodus from Egypt is invoked in the fourth commandment in this *parashah*, in the wording of the *Aseres Hadibros* in Exodus (20:10), a different theme appears: For [in] six days the Lord made the heaven and the earth, the sea and all that is in them, and He rested on the seventh day. Therefore, the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and sanctified it. Reflecting both these themes, the Kiddush recited on Friday night states that Shabbos is *zecher lema'aseh bereishis*, a remembrance of the creation of the world, and *zecher liyetzias mitzrayim*, a remembrance of the Exodus from Egypt.

There is a dual theme that underlies the recitation of Kiddush. On the one hand, God

as the Lord your God commanded you. <sup>13</sup> Six days may you work, and perform all your labor, <sup>14</sup> but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the Lord your God; you shall perform no labor; neither you, your son, your daughter, your manservant, your maidservant, your ox, your donkey, any of your livestock, nor the stranger who is within your cities, in order that your manservant and your maidservant may rest like you. <sup>15</sup> And you shall remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt, and that the Lord your God took you out from there\* with a strong hand and with an outstretched arm; therefore, the Lord, your God, commanded you to observe the Sabbath day. <sup>16</sup> Honor your father and your mother as the Lord your God commanded you, in order that your days be lengthened, and that it may go well with you on the land that the Lord, your God, is giving you. <sup>17</sup> You shall not murder. And you shall not commit adultery.



Himself sanctified the Sabbath through having rested on the seventh day. For this reason, Kiddush on Friday night initiates with the verses of וַיְבָרֵךְ which affirm that God rested on the seventh day, and concludes with the blessing מְקַדְּשׁ הַשַּׁבָּת, *who sanctifies the Sabbath*—God Himself sanctified the Sabbath through having rested on that day. In contrast, while God Himself vested holiness into the Sabbath, it is the Jewish people who sanctify the festivals and the Days of Awe through their establishment of each new month. For this reason, the central blessing of the *Amidah* on Yom Tov concludes *who sanctifies Israel and the festivals*; God sanctified Israel, who in turn sanctifies the festivals.

There is an anomalous passage in the Talmud Yerushalmi (*Pesachim* 10:2), which states that the concluding blessing should in fact be phrased *who sanctified Israel and the Sabbath Day*, suggesting that Israel plays a role in the sanctification of Shabbos as well. Consistent with the idea implied by the Yerushalmi, there is a passage in *Leviticus* 23 which suggests that Israel sanctifies both the Sabbath and festivals alike: *...appointed times which you shall set aside as convocations of holiness, these are my appointed times. Six days shall you work and on the seventh day shall be a Sabbath, a holy convocation...* (verses 2-3). The passage then goes on to discuss the festivals. In the context of these verses, Shabbos, like the festivals (*mo'adim*), is clearly sanctified by man.

We must therefore conclude that with regard to the Sabbath, there is a dual sanctification: God and man sanctify Shabbos in partnership. For this reason, we invoke both creation and the Exodus in Kiddush. Shabbos was sanctified by God at creation, and at the same time we too sanctify the Shabbos. After the Exodus, both Shabbos and the festivals were sanctified by Israel.

Only in light of the dual sanctification of the Shabbos can we understand the *halachah* of *tosefes Shabbos*, the *mitzvah* to start the Sabbath early and conclude it late. If there is no role for man in the sanctification of the day, there would be no ability for one to extend the Shabbos. When we recite Kiddush on Shabbos, we contribute to the sanctity of the day as a *convocation of holiness*. Kiddush infuses the day with an element of holiness that is missing until these words are recited, even after the Shabbos itself begins. (*Shiurim Lezecher Abba Mori*, Vol. 2, pp. 138-151)

One can use the same rationale to explain the insistence of the *Shulchan Aruch* that one should make Kiddush immediately upon returning from shul on Friday night (*Orach Chaim* 271:1). According to the *Shulchan Aruch*, it is not permitted for man to delay imparting the added holiness to the Shabbat through recitation of the Kiddush. (*Harrerei Kedem*, Vol. 2, pp. 137-138)

ולא תגנוב (נפש) ולא תסחד בחברך סחדותא דשקרא: יח ולא תחמד אתת חברך ולא תרוג בית חברך חקלה ועבדה ואמתה תורה וחמרה וכל די לחברך: יש ית פתגמא האלון מליל יי עם פל קהלכו בטורא מגו אשתא עננא ואמיטתא קל רב ולא פסק וכתבנון על תריו לחוי אבנא ויהבנון לי: כ והנה פד שמעכו ית קלא מגו השוכא וטורא בער באשתא וקרבתו לותי כל רישי שבטיכו וסביכו: כא ואמרתו הא אחונא יי אלהנא ית יקרה וית רבותה וית קל מימרה שמענא מגו אשתא ימא הדיו חוננא ארי זמלל יי עם אנשא ויתקים: כב ובעו למא נמות ארי תיכלנא אשתא רבתא הדא אם מוספין אנהנא למשמע ית קל מימרה דיי אלהנא עוד ומתין אנהנא:

ולא תגנב ם ולא תענה ברעה עד שוא: ם יח ולא תחמד אשת רעה ם ולא תתאוה בית רעה שדהו ועבדו ואמתו שורו וחמרו וכל אשר לרעה: ם חמישי יש את הדברים האלה דבר יהוה אל-פל-קהלכם בחר מתוך האיש העני והערפל קול גדול ולא יסף ויכתבם על-שני לוחת אבנים ויתנם אלי: כ ויהי כשמעכם את-הקול מתוך החשך והחר בער באש ותקרבו אלי כל-ראשי שבטיכם וזקניכם: כא ותאמרו הן הראנו יהוה אלהינו ואת-גדלו ואת-קלו שמענו מתוך האש היום הזה ראינו כ-ידבר אלהים את-האדם וחי: כב ועתה למה נמות כי תאכלנו האש הגדלה הזאת אס-יפים | אנחנו לשמע את-קול יהוה אלהינו עוד ומתנו:

דבריהם צנשימה אחת, ומדת הקדוש צרוך הוא אינו כן, לא היה פוסק, ומשלא היה פוסק לא היה מוסיק, כי קולו חזק וקיים לעולם. דבר אחר, ולא יסף, לא הוסיף להראות צלוחו פומני:

(יח) ולא תתאוה. ולא קירוג, אף הוא לשון חמדה, כמו נחמד למראה (בראשית ב ט) דמתרגמינן דמרגג למתוי: (יט) ולא יסף. מתרגמינן ולא פסק, לפי שמדת בשר ודם אינן יכולין לדבר כל

*nor shall you desire your neighbor's house, his field, his manservant, his maidservant, his ox, his donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbor.* The Torah is not interested only in human physical actions—be it on an individual physiological level such as eating, or on the social level such as manufacturing or selling goods. The Torah is also interested in the inner activities of the Jew, in his emotional life. The Torah knows that some emotions that a person experiences, such as hate and envy, are disjunctive, and the Torah requires the person to disown such emotions, to reject them and drive them out of his personality. If an emotion is destructive, then man is capable of rejecting it.

Let me give you a personal example. I was very envious as a child. I was envious of my friends, because they did not consider me a bright child. This impression was created because I was intellectually honest. I would declare that I did not comprehend a topic when I did not truly understand it. I was very envious of another child in *cheder* who was reputed to know one hundred pages of the Talmud by heart. I remember my father called me in once and told me that envy is a *middah megunah*, a deplorable trait, a bad habit, an emotional enemy. These emotions have been forbidden by the Torah: *You shall not covet* (Ex. 20:14) and *You shall not desire*. I began to train myself to overcome my envy, and I succeeded. Now there is no envy in my heart. On the contrary, I rejoice in the success of my fellow man. The Torah demanded of

*And you shall not steal. And you shall not bear false witness against your neighbor. 18 And you shall not covet your neighbor's wife, nor shall you desire your neighbor's house, his field, his manservant, his maidservant, his ox, his donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbor.\* 19 The Lord spoke these words to your entire assembly at the mountain out of the midst of the fire, the cloud, and the opaque darkness, with a great voice, which did not cease. And He inscribed them on two stone tablets and gave them to me. 20 And it was, when you heard the voice from the midst of the darkness, and the mountain was burning with fire, that you approached me, all the heads of your tribes and your elders. 21 And you said, "Behold, the Lord, our God, has shown us His glory and His greatness, and we heard His voice from the midst of the fire; we saw this day that God speaks with man, yet [man] remains alive. 22 So now, why should we die? For this great fire will consume us; if we continue to hear the voice of the Lord, our God, anymore, we will die.\**



man to integrate into his personality constructive, cathartic emotions such as sympathy, love, and gratitude. One has freedom not only to control his physical acts but also to control his emotional life. (*The Rav*, Vol. 2, p. 192)

וּתְאָמְרוּ הֵן הִרְאָנוּ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ אֶת כְּבוֹדוֹ וְאֶת גְּדֻלוֹ... אִם יִסְפִּים אֲנַחְנוּ לְשִׁמֵּעַ אֶת קוֹל יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ עוֹד וְנִמָּתְנוּ - *And you said, "Behold, the Lord, our God, has shown us His glory and His greatness...if we continue to hear the voice of the Lord, our God, anymore, we will die."* In this account, the people's fear of the divine revelation plays an important role. The experience of the revelation of the divine presence at Sinai is described as one of complete awe.

For Rudolf Otto [in his classic work *The Idea of the Holy*] this experience of the fear of God is the greatest element of religion. It is the fear of being overwhelmed by the *mysterium tremendum*. It is the experience of a man who meets something uncanny, something differing totally from him in kind, something from the beyond. He feels that his existence is menaced, defeated, by his meeting with this something. This experience of the fear of God is totally separate from the experience of the love of God, which is an experience of ontic unity with God.

Maimonides refused to accept this view that severs fear from love. For him, the higher kind of fear is both inseparable from the love of God and dialectically related to it. Fear of God is experienced at the highest ontic level on par with love of God: *And what is the way to the love of Him and fear of Him? When a person contemplates His great and wondrous works and creatures and discerns from them His wisdom, which is without measure and without end, he will straightaway love Him, praise Him, glorify Him, and long with an exceeding longing to know His great Name, as David said, "My soul thirsts for God, for the living God" [Ps. 42:3]. And when he considers these very same matters he will straightaway recoil and he will be afraid and fearful and will know that he is an insignificant creature, lowly and turbid, standing with slight and slender knowledge before Him who is perfect in knowledge (Hilchos Yesodei HaTorah 2:2).* Fear here is a feeling of wretchedness and worthlessness, an axiological act of self-negation.

The spiritual, transcendental experience asserts itself in a two-fold movement with respect to God. Man moves in two opposite directions—toward God and away from Him. Love is the movement toward God; fear the movement away from Him. In love man runs, flies toward God;

כג ארי מן כל בשרא די ששמע קל מימרא די קמא ממלל מגו אשתא כותנא ואתקנים: כד קרב את ושמע ית כל די יימר יי אלהנא ואת תמלל עמנא ית כל די מלל יי אלהנא עמד ונקבל ונעבד: כה ושמיע קדם יי ית קל פתגמיכון במללותכון עמי ואמר יי לי שמיע קדמי ית קל פתגמי עמא הדיון די מלילו עמד אתקינו כל די מלילו: כו לוי די יהי לבא הדיון להון למדחל קדמי ולמטר ית כל פקודי כל יומיא בדיל דיישב להון ולבניהון לעלם: כז אול אמר להון תובו לכון למשקניכון: כח ואת הקא חים קדמי ואמלל עמד ית כל תפקדתא וקמיא ודיעיא די תלפון ויעבדון בארעא די אנא יחב להון למירתה: כט ותשרון למעבד קמא די פקיד יי אלהכון יתכון לא תססון ימינא ושמאלא: ל בכל ארחה די

כג כי מי כל-בשר אשר שמע קול אלהים חיים מדבר מתוד-האש פמנו ויחי: כד קרב אתה ושמע את כל-אשר יאמר יהוה אלהינו ואת | תדבר אלינו את כל-אשר ידבר יהוה אלהינו אליך ושמענו ועשינו: כה וישמע יהוה את-קול דבריכם בדברכם אלי ויאמר יהוה אלי שמעתי את-קול דברי העם הזה אשר דברו אליך היטיבו כל-אשר דברו: כו מיינתן והיה לבכם זה להם ליראה אתי ולשמר את-כל-מצותי כל-הימים למען ייטב להם ולבניהם לעלם: כז לך אמר להם שובו לכם לאהליכם: כח ואתה פה עמד עמדי ואדברה אליך את כל-המצוה והחקים והמשפטים אשר תלמדם ועשו בארץ אשר אנכי נתן להם לרשתה: כט ושמרתם לעשות פאשר צוה יהוה אלהיכם אתכם לא תסרו ימין ושמאל: ל בכל-הדרך אשר

(כד) ואת תדבר אלינו. המשמס את כמי כנקנה, שננטערתמי עליוס ורפיתס את ידי, כי רחיתי שאינס חרדיס להתקרנ ולאו מאהנה, וכי לא היה יפה לנס ללמוד מפי הגבורה ולא ללמוד ממני:

in fear he retreats, flees from Him. The most important word in Maimonides' description of fear is *recoil*, in the phrase, *he will straightaway recoil* (מִיָּד הוּא נִרְתַּע לְאַחֲרָיו). Love and fear together constitute a unity. Man approaches God at a rapid pace, where all his being, beset by the pangs of fiery longing, drives toward the encounter with his Creator. He yearns to draw near and be united with God, the source and origin of all being. However, the movement encounters resistance and comes to a stop. Man, afraid to attain his goal, reverses direction, and instead of driving towards his goal, he begins to flee from it. (*Maimonides: Between Philosophy and Halakhah*, pp. 223-225)

— *the living God*. Judaism never equated death with holiness. The Zohar (*Parashas Vayechi* 1:220) writes: *Death deprives the Jew of his Creator's holiness, his divine image [tzelem Elohim], and his holy spirit; what remains is the lowly body*. God here is called אֱלֹהִים חַיִּים, and the Torah is described as עֵץ חַיִּים, *a tree of life* (Prov. 3:18). In contrast, the Egyptian civilization from which the Israelites emerged was obsessed with death, and Egyptians were commonly engaged in life-long preparation for the hereafter (see commentary on Num. 6:6). (*Reflections*, Vol. 2, p. 102)

— *You approach, and hear all that the Lord, our God, will say, and you speak to us all that the Lord, our God, will speak to you*. The Israelites asked that Moses speak to them as an intermediary. They felt

23 For who is there of all flesh, who heard the voice of the living God\* speaking from the midst of the fire, as we have, and lived? 24 You approach, and hear all that the Lord, our God, will say, and you speak to us all that the Lord, our God, will speak to you,\* and we will hear and do.” 25 And the Lord heard the sound of your words when you spoke to me, and the Lord said to me, “I have heard the sound of the words of this people that they have spoken to you; they have done well in all that they have spoken. 26 Would that their hearts be like this, to fear Me and to keep all My commandments all the days, that it might be well with them and with their children forever! 27 Go say to them, ‘Return to your tents.’ 28 But as for you, stand here with Me,\* and I will speak to you all the commandments, the statutes, and the ordinances which you will teach them, that they may do them in the land which I give them to possess.” 29 Keep them to perform [them] as the Lord your God has commanded you; do not turn aside either to the right or to the left. 30 In all the way

they were not on a high enough level for direct contact with the Divine. God answered that they had spoken well, suggesting that He found their reasoning acceptable. The Midrash comments that the Israelites’ “speaking well” (הִשְׁבִּיבוּ כָּל אִשְׁרָךְ דְּבָרָי) was akin to *hatavas hamenorah*, the cleaning of the Menorah in the Temple (*Vayikra Rabbah* 32:2). The Midrash’s analogy suggests that the Israelites felt that they were unworthy of the gift of prophecy. Prophecy is meant for *yechidei segulah*—distinctive individuals whose character traits are flawless.

God indicated that their feeling of unworthiness was appropriate. The Midrash cited above teaches that lighting the Menorah presupposes prior *hatavah*, cleaning. Just as the burning of the Menorah requires preparation, so does prophecy.

During the incident of Eldad and Medad who prophesied in the camp (*Num.* 11:26-29), Joshua asked Moses to incarcerate them. Moshe replies, *If only all the Lord’s people were prophets, that the Lord would bestow His spirit upon them!* The text implies that in the future, the entire nation will be prophets, as the prophet Joel (3:1) states: *And so it shall happen after this that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh, and your sons and daughters will prophesy, your elders will dream [prophetic] dreams and your young men will see visions.* (*Darosh Darash Yosef*, pp. 398-399)

וְאָתָּה פֶּה עֹמֵד עִמָּדִי - Go say to them, “Return to your tents.” But as for you, stand here with Me. After the giving of the Torah, other people could go back to their jobs and to their homes, but Moses could not return to an earthly life. Moses discovered that teaching is not enough for a leader of Israel. His job was nursing, carrying the baby in his arms, watching every step, guessing the baby’s needs, feeling pain when the baby cries and being happy when the baby is cheerful. It entailed the tragic realization that from now on he had no rights at all. He was not entitled to enjoy life as an individual, to be happy in an ordinary way, like any other human being. He lost his family; he became the mother-nurse of the Jewish people. There was a census taken in the desert at the beginning and again at the end of the forty years. Moses’ children are not mentioned once. He no longer had children of his own; he was the mother of the entire community (see commentary on *Num.* 12:7). (*Vision and Leadership*, pp. 176-181)

פקיד יי אלהכון ותכון תהכון גדיל  
 דתחיון ויישב לכוון ותורכוון יומיו  
 בארעא די תירתוון: א ודא תפקדתא  
 קנמיא ודיניא די פקיד יי אלהכון  
 לאלפא ותכוון למעבד בארעא די אתון  
 עבריו תמן למירתה: ב גדיל דתדחל  
 קדם יי אלהך למטר ית כל קמוהי  
 ופקודוהי די אנא מפקדך את וברך  
 ובר ברך כל יומי חייך ובדיל דיורכון  
 יומיך: ג ותקבל ישראל ותטר למעבד  
 די ייטב לך ודי תסגון לחדא כמא די  
 מליל יי אלהא דאבהתך לך ארעא  
 עבדא חלב ודבש: ד שמע ישראל יי  
 אלהנא יי חד: ה ותרחם ית יי אלהך

צוה יהוה אלהיכם אתכם תלכו למען תחיון וטוב  
 לכם והארכתם ימים בארץ אשר תירשון: ו א וזאת  
 המצוה החקים והמשפטים אשר צוה יהוה אלהיכם  
 ללמד אתכם לעשות בארץ אשר אתם עברים  
 שמה לרשתה: ב למען תירא את־יהוה אלהיך °  
 לשמר את־כל־חקותיו ומצותיו אשר אנכי מצוה  
 אתה ובנה ובן־בנה כל ימי חייך ולמען יארכו ימך:  
 ג ושמעת ישראל ושמרת לעשות אשר ייטב לך  
 ואשר תרבו מאד כאשר דבר יהוה אלהי אבותיך לך:  
 ארץ זבת חלב ודבש: פ ששי ד שמע ישראל יהוה  
 אלהינו יהוה | אחד: ה ואהבת את יהוה אלהיך

° ע' רבתי  
 ° ד' רבתי

(זכריה ד, ט) ציוס ההוא יהיה ה' אקדד ושמנו אקדד: (ה) ואהבת.  
 עשה דבריו מאהבה, אינו דומה עושה מאהבה לעושה מיראה,  
 העושה אלל רבו מיראה כשהוא מטריח עליו מניחו והולך לו:

(ד) ה' אלהינו ה' אחד. ה' שהוא אלהינו עמה ולא אלהי  
 האומות, הוא עמיד להיות ה' אחד, שנאמר (צפניה ג, ט) פי  
 אף אהפוך אל עמים שפה צרוקה לקרא כלם בשם ה', ונאמר

שמע ישראל - Hear, O Israel. Maimonides maintains that the two recitations of *Kerias Shema*, that of night and of morning, constitute one *mitzvah*. If one recites *Kerias Shema* in the morning but not at night, or vice versa, his fulfillment of the *mitzvah* is deficient. The dual recitation reflects two aspects of the imperative of *kabbalas ol malchus shamayim*, the acceptance of the yoke of Heaven. During the day we make various requests of God in the blessings of *Shema*, yet no requests are made in the evening blessings. This difference indicates that the concept of accepting the yoke of Heaven differs at night from during the day. At night, the verse שמע ישראל is not a request but a statement of fact: *Hear O Israel, God is our Sovereign and He is our only God*. During the day, the verse is interpreted in accordance with Rashi's interpretation: Hear O Israel, the Lord who is [presently] our God will assert Himself universally as the One God [in the Messianic era]. Consistent with the many requests that we make in the blessings of *Kerias Shema*, the first verse of *Shema* also constitutes a request—that He should hasten the time in which His unity will indeed be promulgated. Having these two distinct interpretations in mind for *Kerias Shema* of the night and the morning, respectively, constitutes one unified *mitzvah*. We must first acknowledge our belief in God's oneness at night before presenting the request that the eschatological vision be realized in the morning. (*Shiurei Harav – Maseches Megillah*, p. 165)

יהוה אלהינו - The Lord is our God. This phrase expresses the idea that Hashem has been accepted as our God, our Master, our Lawgiver, our King and our Ruler—He to whom we are committed, to whom we are obedient, and whose laws and commands we are duty-bound to implement.

which the Lord, your God, has commanded you, you shall go, in order that you may live and that it may be well with you, and so that you may prolong your days in the land you will possess.

**6**<sup>1</sup>This is the commandment, the statutes, and the ordinances that the Lord, your God, commanded to teach you, to perform in the land into which you are about to pass, to possess it. <sup>2</sup>In order that you fear the Lord, your God, to keep all His statutes and His commandments that I command you, you, your son, and your son's son, all the days of your life, and in order that your days may be lengthened. <sup>3</sup>And you shall, [therefore,] hearken, O Israel, and be sure to perform, so that it will be good for you, and so that you may increase exceedingly, just as the Lord, the God of your fathers, spoke to you, a land flowing with milk and honey. <sup>4</sup>Hear, O Israel: \* The Lord is our God, \* the Lord is one. <sup>5</sup>And you shall love the Lord, your God, \*

Contemporary man is an unfree being because he is insecure; he is tied to the moment, never knowing whether disaster will strike the next second. There is only one way for man to free himself from all his restrictions, from all his fears, from all his phobias. Surrender to God frees man from his serfdom to his fellow man. Man rids himself of his fright by faith in God and surrender to Him. (*Festival of Freedom*, pp. 50-51)

יְהוָה אֶחָד - *the Lord is one*. When we affirm God's unity, we intend to state that in His dual role as Creator of the world and as Legislator of the moral norm, He is One. His word made heaven and earth spring into existence, and the same word founded the moral law, the Torah. The bird in flight, the flower opening its leaves toward the sunlight, the tumbling pebbles and the sea waves transmitting energy, all carry out a divine ethical command. Judaism found God both in the cosmos and in the conscience, in natural and in moral necessity, and uncovered oneness in both realms. (*Worship of the Heart*, pp. 124-125)

There is only one form of reality: God. He and Being are identical. אֶחָד, unity, signifies that only God exists. אֶחָד means that there is no autonomy of finite creation separate from God. Real being is possible only within divine enclosure. This notion of God's unity signifies that only He exists and only within Him is existence thinkable. It means negation of the autonomy of finite creation separate from Him. To realize Him is the highest value. One must become conscious of being an integral part of a great process through which the divine will is realized, and also of one's role as an individual with a personal, unique reality. Realization of God as a value is identical with self-realization. (*Worship of the Heart*, p. 134)

וְאָהַבְתָּ אֶת יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ - *And you shall love the Lord, your God*. From the above interpretation of אֶחָד, we can understand the secret of the love of God. Love asserts itself in a feeling of possessiveness, of inseparability from the beloved. For example, the mother's life revolves around her child. She sees herself in him, she lives for him, and lets him not only share her personal existence but absorb it. This love is reflected in a oneness of existence. Similarly, one loves God because one feels that only in God is existence warranted, worthwhile and relevant. One loves insofar as one's existence is afforded to and integrated into another existence. We long to anchor our existences in the absolute and unconditional, in Being as such. (*Worship of the Heart*, pp. 134-135)

Love is a feeling of possession. You want to be near a person to possess him. Therefore

בְּכָל-לִבְבְּךָ וּבְכָל-נַפְשְׁךָ וּבְכָל-מְאֹדְךָ: ֹו וְהָיוּ הַדְּבָרִים  
הָאֵלֶּה אֲשֶׁר אֲנִי מְצַוְּךָ הַיּוֹם עַל-לִבְבְּךָ: ֹו וְשִׁנְנָתָם  
לְבַיְתָךָ וְדַבַּרְתָּ בָּם בְּשִׁבְתְּךָ בְּבֵיתְךָ וּבְלַחְתְּךָ בְּדַרְדְּךָ  
בְּכָל לְבָבְךָ וּבְכָל נַפְשְׁךָ וּבְכָל מְאֹדְךָ: ֹו וְהָיוּ הַדְּבָרִים  
הָאֵלֶּה אֲשֶׁר אֲנִי מְצַוְּךָ הַיּוֹם עַל-לִבְבְּךָ: ֹו וְשִׁנְנָתָם  
לְבַיְתָךָ וְדַבַּרְתָּ בָּם בְּשִׁבְתְּךָ בְּבֵיתְךָ וּבְלַחְתְּךָ בְּדַרְדְּךָ

בכל לבבך. בשני יצריך. דבר אחר, ככל לנצח, שלא יהיה  
לצד חלוק על המקום: ובכל נפשך. אפילו הוא נוטל את  
נפשך: ובכל מאדך. ככל ממונך, יש לך אדם שממונו חציב  
עליו מגופו, לכן נאמר ככל מאדך. דבר אחר, וככל מאדך,  
ככל מדה ומדה שמודל לך, בין צמדת הטוב בין צמדת  
אלא כחדשה שהכל רצין לקראתה. דיוטגמא, מלכות המלך הצאה צמכתא:

the ecstatic soul not only surrenders but aims to conquer and possess infinity. The religious experience is paradoxical and arrogant. But however strange it may appear, it is an element of *Yahadus*. To realize God is to possess Him through love. *Elohim* comes in all possessive grammatical forms: *Eli, Elohai, Elohei Yisrael*. Semantically, this grammatical form borders almost on the absurd. It shows a possessive relation. How can man, being finite and dependent, approach God, infinite and independent? This paradox is perplexing; but Judaism insisted on a community partnership of God and man. (R. Robert Blau)

— with all your heart. Man is able to approach God through his great and passionate love for Him, through an ecstatic experience which enables the finite being to transcend the bounds of finitude and to rise above the limited and relative to the heights of absoluteness and endlessness. Man, many Jewish philosophers and mystics maintained, may reach God not only through the intellect but also the “heart,” through a pure and serene mind, however naïve and simple; through a passionate, sincere, though not intellectually enlightened love; through craving for God, even when the heart which craves has not been illuminated by divine knowledge and wisdom; in loneliness and despair, even if the lonely and despairing soul cannot interpret its own misery; or through joy and jubilation, notwithstanding the fact that the heart which is filled with gratitude and happiness is too ignorant to analyze its aroused emotions. One may find access to God in ignorance and intellectual want as long as he is truthful and his feelings are sincere and genuine. (*Worship of the Heart*, p. 5)

Why should man—how can man—love God? You love yourself and others in whom you see yourself. Rabbeinu Bachya explains that love for God comes about because man is part of God. God has, as it were, moved into man and dwells therein. *בְּכָל לִבְבְּךָ* means that you must love God with all your heart because your heartbeat is not your own; it belongs to God. The breath of God was blown into man—when man breathes, he breathes the breath of God. (Boston, Undated)

— and with all your soul. The precept of *Kiddush Hashem* (sanctification of the Divine Name) is rooted in the ideology evolved by the reading of the *Shema*. The *halachah* infers from these words that one is duty-bound to surrender his life under certain circumstances

with all your heart\* and with all your soul,\* and with all your means. 6 And these words, which I command you this day, shall be upon your heart. 7 And you shall teach them to your sons\* and speak of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk on the way,

rather than transgress the Law (see the Mishnah in *Berachos* 9:5). The principle of the unity of God is therefore not only the very foundation of our faith, it is also a *halachic* postulate. The most pervasive practical expression of this eternal truth can be found in the determination of our people to defend its beliefs and laws even to the point of torture or death. By professing and committing ourselves to the faith in the divine unity, we have pledged our lives to the defense of this truth. (*Worship of the Heart*, pp. 114, 117-119)

Indeed, the word *וּבְכָל*, with all, suggests that there are no areas of existence from which the *halachic* norm is barred. In his search for Being, man discovers his completeness. The word *וּבְכָל* conveys this central thought. There are no neutral areas of existence from which *halachah*, the ethical norm, is barred. The person commits himself totally to God-Being. Through this commitment man finds the oneness of Being in which he shares. (*Worship of the Heart*, p. 141)

וְשִׁנַּנְתֶּם לְבָנֵיכֶם - And you shall teach them to your sons. *Halachically*, there are two fundamentals: First, *And you shall teach them to your sons and speak of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk on the way, and when you lie down and when you rise up*, which expresses the propriety and significance of the cognitive approach to the word. The Torah must be studied, understood, analyzed, broadened and deepened. Under this aspect, the intellectual venture must meet the highest standards of logical thinking: abstraction, definition, analysis, and classification must be flawless, consistent with our great tradition of *halachic* research. The methods must be exact, the thinking clear, the approach objective and faithful, the formulation unequivocal, the premises consistent, etc. These attributes are a result and consequence of unlimited curiosity. This is Talmud Torah.

Second, *And these words, which I command you this day, shall be upon your heart*, *עַל לְבָבְךָ* (verse 6)—a total involvement with particular emphasis upon emotional attachment and assessment, complete identification with the word, getting totally entangled and involved, experiencing the word as an aspect of my own existence, as the substance and meaningfulness of inner personality which one cannot disclaim or forget. Knowledge alone does not suffice. The words should be implanted in thy heart, become one with thy very essence. (*Blessings and Thanksgiving*)

Rashi cites the *Sifri*: “your sons”—these are your students. To build a yeshivah in inhospitable territory is a form of *וְהָיָה אֹרֶךְ יָמֶיךָ*, *Let there be light* (*Gen.* 1:3). Indeed, education is creativity *par excellence*. A formless, undirected child is transformed into a refined Torah scholar. An undisciplined child without any identity, a *tohu vavohu*, is gradually changed into a spiritual personality. Introducing a child to the Biblical narratives about Abraham and Sarah, and later to a Talmudic discourse such as *hazamah* and *hakchashah* (dealing with the exposure of false witnesses) is an act of fashioning a soul, the highest level of creation. This is similar to God's creation, for He, too, is called “the teacher of Torah to His people Israel.” This is the spiritual dimension of parenthood, even as *peru urevu* (the commandment to bear children) is physical creation. (*Reflections*, Vol. 1, pp. 26-27)

ובמשכבך ובקומך: ח ותקטרנו לאת  
 על ידך ויהוון לתפלוין בין עיניך:  
 ט ותכתבנו על מזונו ותקבענו בספי  
 ביתך ובתרעיד: י ויהי ארי ועלך יי  
 אלהך לארעא די קניס לאכהתך  
 לאברהם ליצחק וליעקב למתו לה קרויו  
 רברבו וטבו די לא בניתא: יא ובתין  
 מלו כל טוב די לא מליתא וגבין פסילו  
 די לא פסלתא פרמין וזיתין די לא  
 נצבתא ותיכול ותשבוע: יב אסתמר לה  
 דילמא תנשי ות (דחלתא ד) יי די אפקך  
 מארעא דמצרים מבית עבדותא:

ובשכבך ובקומך: ח וקשרתם לאות על-ידך והיו  
 לטטפת בין עיניך: ט וכתבתם על-מזוזות ביתך  
 ובשעריך: ס י והיה פייביאך | יהוה אלהיך אל-  
 הארץ אשר נשבע לאבתך לאברהם ליצחק וליעקב  
 לתת לך ערים גדלות וטבת אשר לא-בנית:  
 יא ובתים מלאים פל-טוב אשר לא-מלאת וברת  
 חצובים אשר לא-חצבת פרמים וזיתים אשר לא-  
 נטעת ואבלת ושבעת: יב הישמר לך פן-תשכח את-  
 יהוה אשר הוציאך מארץ מצרים מבית עבדים:

ובשכבך. יכול אפילו שכב בחצי היום, תלמוד לומר  
 ובקומך. יכול אפילו עמד בחצי הלילה, תלמוד לומר  
 בשנתך צניחך וצלמך צדך, דרך ארץ דניה תורה, זמן  
 שכינה וזמן קימה: (ח) וקשרתם לאות על ידך. אלו  
 תפילין שזורע: והיו לטטפת בין עיניך. אלו תפילין  
 שצראש, ועל שם מנין פרשיותיהם נקראו טוטפות, טט  
 צנחפי שמים, פת צאפריקי שמים: (ט) מזוזות ביתך.  
 מזוזות כתיב, שאין לריך אלא אחת: ובשעריך. לרבות  
 שערי חרות ושערי מדינות ושערי עיירות: (יא) חצובים.  
 לפי שהיה מקום טרשין וסלעים נופל צו לשון חנינה:  
 (יב) מבית עבדים. כתרומו מצית עבדוקא, ממקום שהייתם שם עבדים:

(1) ושנתם. לשון חדוד הוא, שיהיו מחודדים צפין, שאם  
 ישאלך אדם דבר לא תהא לריך לגמגם צו אלא אמור לו  
 מיד: לבניך. אלו התלמידים, מצינו בכל מקום שהתלמידים  
 קרוים צנים, שנאמר (להלן יד, ה) צנים אָתָם לה' אֱלֹהֵיכֶם.  
 ואומר (מלכים ב, ג, ג) צני הנביאים אָשֶׁר בֵּית אֵל. וכן בחזקיהו  
 שלמד תורה לכל ישראל קראם צנים, שנאמר (ד"ה ב, כט, יא)  
 צני עֲתָה אֵל תִּשְׁלוּ. וכשם שהתלמידים קרוים צנים, שנאמר  
 (להלן יד, ה) צנים אָתָם לה' אֱלֹהֵיכֶם, כך הרצ קרוי אב, שנאמר  
 (מלכים ב, ג, יב) אָבִי אָבִי רָכַב יִשְׂרָאֵל וגו': ודברת בם. שלא  
 יהא עיקר דבורך אלא צם, עשם עיקר ואל חעשם טפלו:

and speak of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk on the way, and when you lie down and when you rise up. The halachah declares that man stands before God not only in the synagogue but also in the public domain, in his house, while on a journey, while lying down and rising up. Judaism does not direct its glance upward but downward. The halachah does not aspire to a heavenly transcendence, nor does it seek to soar upon the wings of some abstract, mysterious spirituality. It fixes its gaze upon concrete, empirical reality and does not allow its attention to be diverted from it. Halachic man does not compartmentalize reality—this is the domain of eternal life and this the domain of temporal life. On the contrary, he brings down eternity into the midst of time. He does not enter into a hidden, pure, transcendent realm even in his intimate prayer-colloquy with his Creator. Even when halachic man enters the synagogue or study house, he does not leave his this-worldly life behind. His prayer is replete with requests regarding bodily needs: healing, prosperity, political freedom, a good and peaceful life.

In contrast, the strange, disturbing dualism that blossoms forth in other religions is grounded in the fragmentation of life into many different sectors. For *Homo religiosus*, the world of

and when you lie down and when you rise up.\* 8 And you shall bind them for a sign upon your hand, and they shall be for ornaments between your eyes.\* 9 And you shall inscribe them upon the doorposts of your house and upon your gates. 10 And it will be, when the Lord, your God, brings you to the land He swore to your fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give you, great and good cities that you did not build, 11 and houses full of all good things that you did not fill, and hewn cisterns that you did not hew, vineyards and olive trees that you did not plant, and you will eat and be satisfied. 12 Beware, lest you forget the Lord, Who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.



prayer and the world of reality have nothing to do with each other. He enters his sanctuary humble and contrite, in a mood of submission and humility. In this religious atmosphere filled with the thick clouds of incense and the echoes of the hymns of angels and seraphim, he divests himself of his arrogance, of his rigid, unbending character, and becomes the very model of meekness, self-effacing and bowed down. And he leaves the same way he entered, humble and submissive [cf. *Sanhedrin* 88b]. However, no sooner does he step outside into the noisy, clamorous street than he reverts to his original persona, to his previous haughty and conceited self-centeredness. The heavenly kingdom does not come into the slightest contact with the earthly kingdom. This mode of behavior cannot even be considered a form of flattery or religious obsequiousness. It is rather a manifestation of a strange, obscure, psychic dualism whose nature cannot be determined. The man in the sanctuary and the man in the marketplace are two separate and distinct personalities who have absolutely nothing in common with one another. How many noblemen bowed down before the cross in a spirit of abject submission and self-denial, confessed their sins with scalding tears and bitter cries; and in the very same breath, as soon as they left the dim precincts of the cathedral, ordered that innocent people be cruelly slain. We have here a manifestation of a deep fissure in one's psychic identity.

The *halachah* rejects such a personality split, such a spiritual schizophrenia. It does not differentiate between the man who stands in his house of worship, engaged in ritual activities, and the mortal who must wage the arduous battle of life. (*Halakhic Man*, pp. 92-94)

וְקָשַׁרְתֶּם לְאָזְנוֹתַי עַל יָדֶיךָ וְהָיָה לְטֹטְפֹתַי בֵּין עֵינָיךָ - And you shall bind them for a sign upon your hand, and they shall be for ornaments between your eyes. Man's success depends on his ability to link abstract thought with concrete action, in uniting conception and realization. Many are blessed with theoretical knowledge, but with no desire to apply this knowledge to practice. They are filled with great ideas, imagination and depth of understanding, but lack the drive to formulate a plan to implement their ideas. For such a person, his hands do not respond to his head.

The ideal in Judaism is revealed in he who merits both gifts: the ability to both study and act, who achieves both longing and realization. How unfortunate is the individual who has a gap between the mind and the hand. Many Jews love Judaism in their hearts and recognize its beauty and charm, but nonetheless do not yearn to assume its lofty values in any real sense. Their potential does not translate into action.

The Torah thus commanded us to place *tefillin* both on the head and on the arm, representing the powerful combination of thought coupled with action. (*Shiurei HaGrid al Sta"m*, p. 124)



13 You shall revere the Lord, your God,\* serve Him,\* and swear by His name. 14 Do not go after other gods, of the gods of the peoples who are around you. 15 For the Lord, your God, is a zealous God among you, lest the wrath of the Lord, your God, be kindled against you, and destroy you off the face of the earth. 16 You shall not try the Lord, your God, as you tried Him in Massah. 17 Diligently keep the commandments of the Lord, your God, and His testimonies. and His statutes, which He has commanded you. 18 And you shall do what is proper and good in the eyes of the Lord, in order that it may be well with you, and that you may come and possess the good land which the Lord swore to your forefathers, 19 to drive out all your enemies from before you, as the Lord has spoken. 20 If your son asks you in time to come, saying, "What are the testimonies, the statutes, and the ordinances, which the Lord our God has commanded you?"



The second reason Judaism glorifies the teacher and idealizes him is that authority and ownership are identical concepts. Authority is vested in the owner, who can dispose of or use his property in any arbitrary fashion he chooses. The head of the political community is denied authority because he does not own his so-called subjects. They are his equals, over whom he has no right to rule. It is God's authority that is boundless, because He is the Maker of all things. *The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof, the world and they who dwell in it; for He has founded it upon the seas... Lift up your heads, O gates... and the King of glory shall come in!* (Ps. 24:1-2, 7). He is the King of unlimited authority, *Melech hakavod*, because He is the creator. *Melech evyon*, an earthly king, has no authority, since he is no creator.

But if the teacher is not a creator *ex nihilo*, Judaism looks upon him at least as a fashioner, an artisan who takes primordial matter and impresses form upon it. The teacher shapes something amorphous into something beautiful and fascinating. The subject does not belong to the king, but the pupil belongs to the teacher, because the latter trained and enlightened his mind, sensitized his heart, molded his personality, and brought out the noblest and finest in him. Judaism considers the teaching of Torah a reflection of the infinite process of creation initiated by God at the dawn of existence, which has never come to a close. God summons man to participate in the great, wondrous drama of creation. The teacher, the *rebbe*, answers the call and joins the Creator; hence, he has a share in the student. He owns him because he is responsible for that for which the student stands. And it is self-evident that with the ownership comes authority.

Is the Messiah a politically powerful monarch who will foist his authority upon mankind by using the sword? Certainly not! Rather, the Messiah is the great, wondrous teacher-prophet who will instruct and enlighten, and by so doing he will redeem the world. (*Vision and Leadership*, pp. 157-159)

וַיֹּאמֶר תַּעֲבֹד - *serve Him*. Maimonides (*Sefer Hamitzvos*, *aseh 5*) quotes Rabbi Eliezer the son of Rabbi Yosi Hagelili who interprets the phrase וַיֹּאמֶר תַּעֲבֹד as *serve Him with His Torah, and serve Him in His Temple*, that is, *serve Him through prayer*. *Avodah Shebalev*, service of the heart, encompasses both imperatives of Torah study and prayer. Thus, to fulfill *Avodah Shebalev* in its fullest sense, it is preferable for one to pray in a *Beis Midrash*, a house of study. (*Reshimos Shiurim – Berachos*, p. 77)

כא ותימר לבנה עבדים היינו לפרעה במצרים ואפקנא יי מצרים בידא תקופא: כב ויהב יי אתיו ומופתיו ורביו ובישיו במצרים בפרעה ובכל אנש ביתה לעינא: כג ונתנא אפק מתמון גדיל לאעלא יתנא למתו לנא ית ארעא די קיים לאבדתנא: כד ופקדנא יי למעבד ית כל קמנא האליו למדחל ית יי אלהנא לטב לנא כל יומיא לקמונתא כיומא הדיו: כה וכוותא תחי לנא ארי נטר למעבד ית כל תפקדתא הדא קדם יי אלהנא כמא די פקדנא: א ארי ועלנא יי אלהה לארעא די את עלל לתמון למורתה ויתרד עממו סגיאיו מן קדמך חתאי וגרשאי ואמראי וכנענאי ופרזאי וחזאי ויבסאי שבעא עממו סגיאיו ותקופיו מנד: ב וימסרנו יי אלהה קדמך ותמחנון גמרא תגמר ותחון לא תגור להון קים ולא תרחם עליהון: ג ולא תתחתן בהון

כא ואמרת לבנה עבדים היינו לפרעה במצרים ויציאנו יהוה ממצרים ביד חזקה: כב ויתן יהוה אותת ומפתים גדלים ורעים | במצרים בפרעה ובכל ביתו לעינינו: כג ואותנו הוציא משם למען הביא אתנו לתת לנו את הארץ אשר נשבע לאבותינו: כד ויצונו יהוה לעשות את כל החקים האלה ליראה את יהוה אלהינו לטוב לנו כל הימים לחייתנו פהיום הזה: כה וצדקה תהיה לנו פינשמור לעשות את כל המצוה הזאת לפני יהוה אלהינו כפי אשר צונו: ס שביעי ז א פי ביאה יהוה אלהיה אל הארץ אשר אתה באשמה לרשתה ונשל גוים רבים | מפניה החתי והגרגשי והאמרי והכנעני והפרזי והחוי והיבוי שבעה גוים רבים ועצומים ממה: ב ונתנם יהוה אלהיה לפניך והפיתם החרם תחרים אתם לא תכרת להם ברית ולא תחנם: ג ולא תתחתן בהם

(א) ונשל. לשון השלכה והסוה, וכן (להלן יט, ה) ונשל הצניז: (ב) ולא תחנם. לא תמן להם סוף, אסור לו לאדם לומר כמה נאה גוי זה. דבר אחר, לא תמן להם חנייה צורך:



*We were slaves to Pharaoh. We were slaves to Pharaoh, not Pharaoh's slaves.* The former is only a juridic-social description; the Jews belonged to Pharaoh legally, but spiritually were free people with their own minds and an independent approach to reality. In contrast, Pharaoh's Egyptian slaves are called עבדי פרעה (Gen. 50:7; Ex. 10:7, 11:3). When we state that someone is "Pharaoh's slave," we identify his whole personality with Pharaoh. Serving Pharaoh is not just incidental; it is the whole purpose of his life. In the same way, the term עבד יהוה, *God's servant*, is used in the Bible (e.g., 34:5). Our service to the Almighty is not foreign and incidental, but rather indispensable to our existence, intrinsic and inseparable from our ontological awareness. We are just servants of God, and nothing else.

The Jews in Egypt were slaves only in a political-economic sense. Had they been slaves existentially, had they lost their love of freedom and their spiritual heritage, had they been "Pharaoh's slaves" and not just "slaves to Pharaoh," they never would have been liberated. They would have lost their personality and their quest for freedom. For the Jews, slavery was extrinsic, not intrinsic. It did not destroy their inner personality. Even in the crucible of slavery and oppression, the Jews had not forfeited their dignity and sense of loyalty. They remained the children of the patriarchs, hoping and praying for a better future. Since slavery had not

21 You shall say to your son, “We were slaves to Pharaoh\* in Egypt, and the Lord took us out of Egypt with a strong hand. 22 And the Lord gave signs and wonders, great and terrible, upon Egypt, upon Pharaoh, and upon all his household, before our eyes. 23 And he brought us out of there, in order that He might bring us and give us the land which He swore to our fathers. 24 And the Lord commanded us to perform all these statutes, to fear the Lord, our God, for our good all the days,\* to keep us alive, as of this day. 25 And it will be for our merit that we keep to observe all these commandments before the Lord, our God, as He has commanded us.”

7<sup>1</sup> When the Lord, your God, brings you into the land to which you are coming to possess it, He will cast away many nations from before you: the Hittites, the Girgashites, the Amorites, the Canaanites, the Perizzites, the Hivvites, and the Jebusites, seven nations more numerous and powerful than you. 2 And the Lord, your God, will deliver them to you, and you shall smite them. You shall utterly destroy them; neither shall you make a covenant with them, nor be gracious to them. 3 You shall not intermarry with them;

corrupted them fully, and since they remained spiritually free, the great miracle of the Exodus took place. (*Exalted Evening*, pp. 33-34)

There are two types of relationship between master and slave. Sometimes a slave is owned by an individual, and sometimes the slave is the property of the state. Both forms of bondage are degrading, but there is a distinction between private and public bondage. When owned by an individual, a slave may attain a position of power in the master's household. The best example is Joseph, who had Potiphar's complete trust. However, if the slave is the property of a cold, merciless, cruel corporate state, then no personal relationship is imaginable, no friendship or sympathy will ever be aroused, no personal contact developed. Usually the slaves of the state lose their identity; no matter how long the prisoner stays in jail, he is as new to the warden as he was the first day. The same impersonal, indifferent, cruel relationship persists from day to day, week to week, year to year. There is not a single bit of humanity in the institution of state slavery. We were slaves not only to Pharaoh, but to *Pharaoh in Egypt*. Egypt was a corporate state, and its head was Pharaoh. The Pharaoh was not an individual; indeed, we do not know his name. Even the personality of the king was erased! In a slave society, individuality submerges into a common pool, the faceless crowd of slaves. This is the meaning of the phrase עֲבָדִים הָיִינוּ לְפָרֹעַ בְּמִצְרַיִם, *We were slaves to Pharaoh in Egypt*. We were his faceless slaves, and the relationship was impersonal. And, of course, an impersonal relationship is a cruel relationship. (*Festival of Freedom*, p. 49)

לְטוֹב לָנוּ כָּל הַיָּמִים - *for our good all the days*. Judaism accepted the here-and-now order of things and events, and sanctioned the creative efforts of man to shape his own destiny and conditions of physical existence and to promote his material welfare. It did not divorce the ethical motif from the human being's utilitarian nature. Moses already emphasized the pragmatic element in a life dedicated to God and His word. He stressed many times that through the service of God man may find the supreme good, even though the term “good” conveys to him worldly happiness and joy. We may say that the law was given to Israel in order to provide them with a way of life that would assure them well-being and this-worldly fulfillment. (*Family Redeemed*, p. 133)

בְּתֵד לֹא־תִתֶּן לְבָנֹו וּבְתוֹ לֹא־תִקַּח לְבָנָהּ: ד כִּי־יִסִיר אֶת־בְּנֵךְ מֵאַחֲרַי וְעַבְדוּ אֱלֹהִים אֲחֵרִים וְחָרָה אַף־יְהוָה בְּכֶם וְהִשְׁמִידֶךָ מִחַר: ה כִּי אִם־פָּה תַעֲשׂוּ לְהֵם מִזְבְּחֹתֵיהֶם תִּתְּצוּ וּמִצְבֹּתֵם תִּשְׁבְּרוּ וְאֲשִׁירֵהֶם תִּגְדְּעוּן וּפְסִילֵיהֶם תִּשְׂרֹפוּן בְּאֵשׁ: ו כִּי עִם קְדוֹשׁ אֲתָה לֵיהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ בְּדָ בַחַר | יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ לְהִיּוֹת לֹו לְעַם סְגֻלָּה מִכָּל הָעַמִּים אֲשֶׁר עַל־פְּנֵי הָאָדָמָה: ז לֹא מֵרַבְּכֶם מִכָּל־הָעַמִּים חֲשַׁק יְהוָה בְּכֶם וּבַבַּחַר בְּכֶם כִּי־אַתֶּם הַמְעַט מִכָּל־הָעַמִּים: ח כִּי מֵאַהֲבַת יְהוָה אֲתֶכֶם וּמִשְׁמֵרוֹ אֶת־הַשְּׁבֻעָה אֲשֶׁר נִשְׁבַּע לְאַבְרָהָם הוֹצִיא יְהוָה אֶתְכֶם בְּיַד חֲזָקָה וּבְיַד־מִבֵּית עַבְדִּים מִיַּד פְּרַעֲה מֶלֶךְ־מִצְרַיִם: מַפְסִיר ט וַיַּדְעַת כִּי־יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ הוּא הָאֱלֹהִים הָאֵל הַנְּאֻמָּן שֹׁמֵר הַבְּרִית וְהַחֹסֵד לְאַהֲבָיו וּלְשֹׁמְרֵי מִצְוֹתָיו לְאֵלֶיךָ דֹּר:

בְּרַתֶּךָ לֹא תִתֶּן לְבָרָה וּבְרַתֶּךָ לֹא תִסַּב לְבָרָה: ד אַרְי וְשַׁעוּן ית בְּרָה מִבְּתֵר פְּלַחְנִי וּפְלַחוּן לְטַעוֹת עַמְמֵיָא וְיִתְקַרַּב רְגִזָא דִּין בְּכוּן וּישַׁצֵּד בְּפָרְעִי: ה אַרְי אִם כְּדוּן תַּעֲבִדוּן לְהוּן אֲגוּרִיהוּן תִּתְרַעוּן וּקְמַתְהוּן תִּתְבָּרוּן וְאֲשִׁרִיהוּן תְּקוּצְצוּן וְצִלְמֵי טַעוֹתְהוּן תּוֹקְדוּן בְּנוֹרָא: ו אַרְי עִם קְדִישׁ אֵת קְדָם יי אֱלֹהֶיךָ בְּהַתְרַעֲי יי אֱלֹהֶיךָ לְמַחְוֵי לַח לְעַם חַבִּיב מִכָּל עַמְמֵיָא דִּי עַל אִפִּי אַרְעָא: ז לֹא מִדְּסִגְיָאִין אֲתוּן מִכָּל עַמְמֵיָא צְבִי יי בְּכוּן וְאִתְרַעֲי בְּכוּן אַרְי אֲתוּן זַעְרִין מִכָּל עַמְמֵיָא: ח אַרְי מְדַרְחָם יי וְתַכוּן וּמְדַנְטֵר ית קָמָא דִּי קָיִים לְאַבְהָתְכוּן אִפְק יי יתְכוּן בְּיָדָא תְּקִיפָא וּפְרַקְדָּא מִבֵּית עַבְדוּתָא מִיָּדָא דְּפְרַעֲה מֶלְכָא דְּמִצְרַיִם: ט וַתַּדַּע אַרְי יי אֱלֹהֶיךָ הוּא אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהָא מְהִימְנָא נְטֵר קָמָא וְחֹסְדָא לְרַחֲמוּהִי וּלְנִשְׁרֵי פְקוּדוּהִי לְאֵלֶיךָ דְּרִיו:

מצותו כתיב °

שֹׁמֵר (ישעיה ז, יד) אֲדָמָה לְעֵלְיוֹן, וּסְנַתְרִיב שֹׁמֵר (שם לו, כ) מִי צָכַל אֱלֹהֵי הַכְּרִלּוֹת, וּסְרִיס שֹׁמֵר (יחזקאל כב, ג) אֵל אֲנִי מוֹשֵׁב אֱלֹהִים יִשְׂרָאֵל: כִּי אַתֶּם הַמְעַט. הִרִי כִי שִׁמְשַׁם זִלְשׁוֹן דֵּהָא: (ד) כִּי מֵאַהֲבַת ח'. הִרִי כִי שִׁמְשַׁם זִלְשׁוֹן אֱלֹהֵי, לֹא מִרְבִּכֶם חֲשַׁק ה' צִכֶּם אֱלֹהֵי מֵאַהֲבַת ה' אֲחִסְתֶּם: וּמִשְׁמֵרוֹ אֵת הַשְּׁבֻעָה. מִחֲמַת שִׁמְרוֹ אֵת הַשְּׁבֻעָה: (ט) לְאַלְף דוּר. וְלֵהֲלֵן הוּא אֹמֵר לְאַלְפִים (לעיל ה, ט), כֹּאן שֶׁהוּא סְמוּךְ אֲלֵל 'לְשׁוּמְרֵי מִצְוֹתֵי' הַעוֹשִׂין מִירָחָה הוּא אֹמֵר לְאַלְף, וְלֵהֲלֵן שֶׁהוּא סְמוּךְ אֲלֵל 'לְאוֹהֲבֵי' הַעוֹשִׂין מֵאַהֲבַת שֶׁשֶׁכֶּרן יוֹתֵר גְּדוֹל הוּא אֹמֵר לְאַלְפִים: לְאוֹהֲבֵי. אֵלוֹ שְׁעוֹשִׂין מֵאַהֲבַת: וּלְשׁוּמְרֵי מִצְוֹתָיו. אֵלוֹ הַעוֹשִׂין מִירָחָה:

(ד) כִּי יִסִּיר אֵת בְּנֵךְ מֵאַחֲרַי. זִנוּ שֶׁל גוֹי כְּשִׂישָׁא אֵת זִנְיָ, יִסִּיר אֵת זִנְיָ אֲשֶׁר חָלַד לוֹ זִנְיָ מֵאַחֲרַי, לְמַדְנֵוּ שֶׁזֶן זִנְיָ הַזֶּה מִן הַגּוֹי קְרִיב זִנְיָ, אֲזַל זֶן זִנְיָ הַזֶּה מִן הַגּוֹי אֵינוֹ קְרִיב זִנְיָ אֲלֵל זִנְיָ, שֶׁהִרִי לֹא נִאֲמַר עַל זִנְיוֹ לֹא תִקַּח כִּי חֲסִיר אֵת זִנְיָ מֵאַחֲרַי, אֲלֵל כִּי יִסִּיר אֵת זִנְיָ וְגו': (ה) מִזְבְּחֹתֵיהֶם. שֶׁל זִנְיָ: וּמִצְבֹּתֵהֶם. אֲזַן אֲחִסְתֶּם: וְאֲשִׁירֵהֶם. אֵילִנוֹת שְׁעוֹזְדִין אֲוֹתָן: וּפְסִילֵיהֶם. לְלַמִּים: (ו) לֹא מֵרַבְּכֶם. כַּפְשׁוּטוֹ. וּמְדַרְשׁוֹ, לְפִי שֶׁאֵין אֲחִסְתֶּם מְגַדִּילִים עֲנַמְכֶם כְּשֶׁאֵין מִשְׁפִּיעַ לְכֶם טוֹבָה לְפִיכֶן חֲשַׁקְתִּי זִכְכֶם: כִּי אֲחִסְתֶּם הַמְעַטִּין עֲנַמְכֶם, כְּגוֹן אֲזִרְהֶם שֹׁמֵר (זְרַאשִׁית יב, כו) וְאֲנִי עֹפֵר וְאִפְרָה, וּכְגוֹן מִשֶׁה וְאֵהֲרִין שֹׁמֵר (שְׁמוֹת טו, י) וְנִקְנֵנוּ מִיָּה. לֹא כְּנִצּוֹכְדִנְנֵר

Not because you are more numerous than any people did the Lord delight in you and choose you, for you are the least of all the peoples. The strength of Judaism, and the secret of its survival, is in its exclusivity. It is in our very smallness as a nation that the faith endures inviolate.

There were two periods in history when Judaism might have become the religion of large segments of humanity. The first was at the end of the Second Temple period (the 1st century CE). At the time a number of Roman notables converted to Judaism. Had that process continued, Judaism might well have become the adopted faith of the Roman Empire. But that did

you shall not give your daughter to his son, and you shall not take his daughter for your son. 4 For he will turn away your son from following Me, and they will worship the gods of others, and the wrath of the Lord will be kindled against you, and He will quickly destroy you. 5 But so shall you do to them: You shall demolish their altars and smash their monuments, and cut down their asherim trees, and burn their graven images with fire. 6 For you are a holy people to the Lord, your God: the Lord your God has chosen you to be His treasured people, out of all the peoples upon the face of the earth. 7 Not because you are more numerous than any people did the Lord delight in you and choose you, for you are the least of all the peoples.\* 8 But because of the Lord's love for you, and because He keeps the oath He swore to your forefathers, the Lord took you out with a strong hand and redeemed you from the house of bondage, from the hand of Pharaoh, the king of Egypt. 9 Know, therefore, that the Lord, your God He is God, the faithful God, Who keeps the covenant and loving kindness with those who love Him and keep His commandments to a thousand generations.



not happen, and in time Rome embraced the Christian faith. The second was in the 7th century when a significant number of people in the Arabian Peninsula likewise became Jews. But rather than Jewish conversion becoming a mass phenomenon, Islam became the dominant faith throughout the Middle East.

In hindsight, in both instances it was the hand of Divine Providence that precluded the mass adoption of the Jewish faith. Why would God oppose this—after all, is that not the hope and expectation of so many of the prophets? Do we not pray for that outcome every time we recite the *Aleinu*? Is it not what the *Mussaf* of Rosh Hashanah implores God to make happen (*place Your fear on all of Your creations...*)? The answer can be found in the *Kuzari* (albeit expressed there in a different context): had either the Roman Empire or the Arab Middle East converted, Judaism as we know it would long ago have ceased to exist. *Yahadus* by its very nature demands extraordinary discipline and consistency of belief and action in every aspect of life, at every hour of every day. Only a select group can be expected to maintain the strictures and responsibilities demanded by our faith.

Had either Rome or Arabia converted en masse to Judaism, the result would inevitably have been the thorough dilution, distortion, and ultimately the disappearance of historical Judaism as a religion. There would have been enormous pressure to modify and reform the faith. As the Midrash put it by way of illustration, murder by the descendants of Esau, theft by the descendants of Ishmael, and sexual depravity by the descendants of Amon and Moab would have been justified and accommodated into the faith by popular demand. Thus, to preserve the Torah in-violate, it was God's will that the Jewish faith would be the exclusive patrimony and possession of *the least of all the peoples*. Only of a select few, those who would remain loyal and committed to the Torah and its demands over time, could He expect fealty to the 613 commandments and all that they entailed.

Our true strength does not lie in large numbers but in the spiritual and moral consistency of our lives in upholding the Torah, without compromise, without apology, even if there are few to bear witness to it. (*R. Basil Herring Summary, Moriah 1952*)

י ומשלם לשנאיו אל-פניו להאבידו לא יאחר לשנאו  
 אל-פניו ישלם-לו: יא ושמרת את-המצוה ואת-  
 החקים ואת-המשפטים אשר אנכי מצוה תיום  
 לעשותם: פ פ פ  
 י ומשלם לסנאוהי טבן די אנון עבדיו  
 קדמוהי בתייהון לאובדיהון לא מאחר  
 עבד טב לסנאוהי טבן די אנון עבדיו  
 קדמוהי בתייהון משלם להון: יא ותשר  
 ית תפקדתא וית קימא וית דיניא די אנא  
 מפקדך יומא דיו למעבדהון:

(י) ומשלם לשנאיו אל פניו. נחיינו משלם לו (ב) היום לעשותם. ולמחר לעולם הנא ליטול שכרם:  
 גמולו הטוב, כדי להאבידו מן העולם הנא:  
 חסלת פרישת ואתחנן

—●●—  
 He will not delay the one who hates Him, but he will repay him to his face. Sin and its punishment are born together. No sin goes without its retribution, whether it be meted out by a terrestrial or a celestial court. The belief in reward and punishment is fundamental to Jewish belief: A man who says that the Holy One, blessed be He, is lax in the execution of justice, shall be disemboweled, for it is stated [32:4], “The deeds of the [Mighty] Rock are

*10 And He repays those who hate Him, to their face, to cause them to perish; He will not delay the one who hates Him, but he will repay him to his face.\* 11 You shall therefore, observe the commandments, the statutes, and the ordinances, which I command you this day to do.*



*perfect, for all His ways are just” (Bava Kama 50a). And in the Torah it is written (verses 9-10): Know, therefore, that the Lord, your God He is God, the faithful God, Who keeps the covenant and loving kindness with those who love Him and keep His commandments to a thousand generations... And He repays those who hate Him... to cause them to perish. Jewish creed is based on the belief in reward and punishment and on the conviction that sin is by no means a transitory phenomenon that passes by, leaving no trace and incurring no liability. Sin and punishment are always linked together. If you will, the very definition of sin is that it is an act that entails paying a penalty. If punishment exists, it is because sin does too.*

*Kapparah* means forgiveness or withdrawal of claim. This is a legal concept, borrowed from the laws of property. Just as one may release his fellow man of a debt owed to him, so may God absolve one of a penalty to which he is liable due to sin. *Kapparah* removes the need for punishment. (*On Repentance*, pp. 57-58)